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**THE CHURCH'S
SELF-REGULATING PRIVILEGE,**

A NATIONAL SAFEGUARD

IN RESPECT OF REAL CHURCH-REFORM;

OR,

REASONS

FOR REVIVING CONVOCATIONS,

OR RESTORING PROVINCIAL AND DIOCESAN SYNODS.

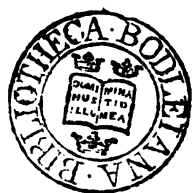
BY JOHN KEMPTHORNE, B.D.

RECTOR OF ST. MICHAEL'S GLOUCESTER.

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P R E F A C E.

THERE is a certain disease of the human mind, which, for want of a more suitable term, may be called *locomotiveness*, or *impatience of any particular locality*. Under its influence the unhappy wanderer, though rich in goods, exempt from professional labour, and secure of possessing any where all that money can command, is ever shifting his abode from villa to villa, from county to county, and would be still shifting it, even if he should traverse the globe in search of a dwelling. When the patient's is an aggravated case, life itself becomes a burden ; despair and a pistol comprises the rest. The course of things is nearly the same in another analogous mental distemper, which consists, according to Holy Writ, in fearlessness of " the LORD and the King," in being

“*given to change*” with respect to all matters civil and religious, and ever impatient of things as they are, though they are substantially good, and though it is a moral certainty that change will not better them. This disease also leaves us no resting-place under the sun, and tends, and often leads on, to self-destruction.

Against reckless dissatisfaction with present good, not a whit more reasonable than a fixed adherence to what is altogether bad, the writer of these pages is desirous of recording his humble testimony. This is not incompatible, he hopes, with readiness,—after amending by the grace of God, in the first instance, whatever is amiss in his own spiritual concerns,—to promote, if he be able, plans of *real* improvement in the Church. Only he cannot help suspecting something awry, and out of all proportion in the thought, that from a little nook, where, within narrow limits, he has a part of his own to act, in the midst of that world of religious means, principles, and polity, which we call the Church, he should be able to lend any aid in guiding and correcting the whole. And if perchance in any degree he should, he cannot side with those who hold that we ought to be always in advance of

the *impetus* of public opinion, without stopping to search narrowly whither it tends; that is, in other words, that we ought to administer stimulants instead of anodynes to patients who may be in a fever.

Let not the reader be prepossessed against the subject-matter of this work, simply because it is unpopular, and involves topics open to controversy, and sometimes of a difficult nature. Two special inconveniences, arising chiefly out of his subject, the author is desirous of noticing here once for all. He is often reluctantly compelled to advert to the harsh and sometimes acrimonious conduct even of many orthodox Dissenters, and to their own recent relaxation of some points of sound doctrine, with an impression also upon his mind,—the fruit, he hopes, of honest and sorrowful conviction, not of intolerance,—that their system savours somewhat of the nature of schism. But he has not at the same time dwelt—perhaps without disturbing his train of argument he could not have dwelt, as he should wish to do—on particulars honourable to their character; on their ability, their seriousness, their missionary exertions, their fellowship with us in one common Protestantism. He is also obliged, by the necessity

know who hath said, "Them that honour ME, I will honour, and they that despise ME, shall be lightly esteemed."

The writer has all along kept Convocations more prominently in view than Provincial Assemblies, properly so called; because he wished to avoid confusion of ideas, because the pleas for the former will easily apply *mutatis mutandis* to the latter, and because, in the first instance at least, Convocations probably, and nothing farther, ought to be considered and sued for. He must, however, confess, that in his own mind inquiry has led to the impression, that the RESTORATION, IN AN AMENDED FORM, OF ANCIENT DIOCESAN AND PROVINCIAL SYNODS,—OF THE FORMER, STATEDLY, OF THE LATTER ON GREAT OCCASIONS,—would be the preferable course, and would ultimately be requisite; in pursuance of the plan intended, after their suspension by Henry VIII., and conformably to the completion of that plan in Cranmer's code of Ecclesiastical Laws. But how such synods ought in our times to be conducted, and how far they should be assimilated to the views of Cranmer, and to primitive Christianity, are topics which would carry him beyond his limits and his powers,

and which he would gladly leave in the hands of those who are far better able to form a correct judgment. He would simply throw out the following queries :—whether, after some preliminary Convocations, Diocesan Synods of Clergy might not be assembled, and Lay-members be present from the Spiritual Courts, merely by Episcopal authority ;—whether stated conventions, comprehending some eminent jurists, might not be holden annually in London at the Bounty Board, (as the most easy and unostentatious mode,) by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, the Prelates agreeing together with the royal sanction to be assembled authoritatively by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in order to receive reports from the several Diocesan Synods, and to act definitively in pursuance of them ;—whether a similar plan might not be instituted in Ireland ;—lastly, whether something like a fairly co-operative union between the two great branches of the same United Church might not thus be attainable.

The author knows it is high time for him to watch as “they that watch for the morning,” for his summons from this dark world ; and his prayer to God is, that by his late and very im-

perfect endeavours, in the present crisis of our holy religion, the SAVIOUR may be in some measure glorified, his Church vindicated, his truth exalted, and his professed disciples induced to love one another. “But if He thus say, I have no delight” in so unworthy an instrument,—“let him do as seemeth good to him.”

As the ensuing discussion commences with the assumption of an important moral and religious proposition, a bare summary of the proof of it,—which is all that is here possible,—is subjoined.

1. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the only Divine Standard of religious truth.

2. All persons blessed with the Holy Scriptures, who rightly and prayerfully use them, as the only Divine Standard, and ordinarily none else, may expect to become acquainted with the doctrines divinely taught, as alone constituting collectively THE TRUTH.

3. It is a known historical fact that those

professedly Christian Communions, primitive and modern, who have really adhered to this only Divine Standard, have avowed substantially the same views of God's own revealed Truth, which views therefore may be called the STANDARD DOCTRINES, and the sum of which is, man's TOTAL ruin by sin, and redemption in the ONE NAME of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, by the ONE ONLY MEDIATOR, JESUS CHRIST.

4. Civil rulers and the people, to whom the Holy Scriptures are vouchsafed, are bound, if they value the favour of Almighty God, "as they have received the gift, so to minister the same as good stewards of the manifold grace of God," and consequently to use all lawful public and national means of promoting the STANDARD DOCTRINES;—only with liberty of conscience for such persons as through something anomalous in their particular case, (how far culpable or not, God alone can judge,) differ from those doctrines;—in other words, civil rulers and their subjects are bound by all that is dear and sacred to ESTABLISH *some* form of the Standard Doctrines, and of those doctrines only.

5. To *establish* such doctrines as are held by those bodies of professed Christians, who notori-

ously adopt *other* Standards than the written Word of God, whether by taking from, or adding to, that Word, would be virtually to participate in supplanting, or disparaging its exclusively divine authority.—To *establish* all religious opinions would be in effect to countenance, among other fatal errors, atheism and idolatry.—To *establish* none, would be to put Christianity upon the same footing of contempt or indifference with infidelity and impiety.—To establish the STANDARD DOCTRINES, by giving the same national sanction to all the Standard Christian Communions, (by which are meant communions differing about Christian ordinances, but agreeing in Standard Doctrines,) would necessarily entangle the government and the country in circumstances of irretrievable complexity and disturbance; and besides, this scheme having been put to the test of experience in the North American States, has signally failed, and been abandoned by them all.

6. The only line of duty therefore in the sight of God is God's own method, as exemplified in the Old Testament, and authorized in the New; namely, to *establish* some one Standard Communion, possessing on the whole suitable quali-

cations, in the name, as it were, of the rest, and for the good of all ;—reserving the rights of conscience inviolate to men of other communions.

7. The Protestant Episcopal Church of England and Ireland,—besides other qualifications, such as the episcopal *authority* and *order* of its ministry and its character as “the pillar and base of the truth” in these realms,—possesses paramount claims to retain its office as the Establishment for England and Ireland, because having been already established for centuries past, it has been made a blessing to this whole nation, and a bulwark to Protestantism, and a witness for sound scriptural religion in the world at large.

8. The united Church of England and Ireland has this peculiar advantage, that the property employed in maintaining its ministrations,—with the exception of some few endowments rightly transferred from superstitious uses to the support of true religion,—originated long before the prevalent usurpations of Popery, in the donations and bequests of individuals for the purpose of promoting doctrines, conformable in the main to the STANDARD DOCTRINES of Primitive Christianity, and their modern restoration by

Protestantism. The Reformation only brought back the property of the Church to the aid of those main doctrines from which it had been for a time wrested in furtherance of papal heresies. Let that property by all lawful means be rendered effective in accomplishing the sacred trusts for which it was bestowed. But to alienate it now to other than Protestant Church-purposes would be not merely to pervert the intentions of the founders, to undermine the religious Establishments of the empire, to endanger the endowments of Protestant Dissenters themselves, and to strike the first blow at the fundamental rights of property in this realm, but also in effect to renounce the guidance of Holy Scripture, and to sin with a high hand against the truth and the laws of Almighty God.

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DUE SELF-REGULATION, &c.

CHAPTER I.

The Church's cry, generally considered, for permission to hold her legitimate Councils, with a view to her own defence and amelioration, and her greater utility to the whole country.

WE set out with a proposition, capable of distinct and satisfactory proof, in the opinion of Churchmen, to whom especially the subsequent remarks are addressed ;—namely, that the UNITED CHURCH of ENGLAND and IRELAND ought, on every principle of moral necessity, of Christian duty, and of sound Christian policy, to be retained and supported, and, as far as possible, ameliorated ;—for the full discharge of her high and holy trust, as the National Church for England and

Ireland; the grand source of blessing, spiritual and temporal, to the whole realm; and, under God, the principal safety-lamp to Protestantism, or genuine scriptural Christianity, throughout the world. For this purpose its *essential* properties, as an adequate Church Establishment ought, with all possible care, to be watched over, fortified, and kept in a state of vigorous and salutary operation. These properties are, first, its PROFESSION of the PURE SCRIPTURAL STANDARD-TRUTHS of the GOSPEL of CHRIST; secondly, its EXHIBITIVE; thirdly, its DIFFUSIVE; fourthly, its PERPETUATIVE capacity, in regard to those truths; fifthly, its scriptural form of CHURCH GOVERNMENT; and sixthly, its SELF-REGULATING POWER. The last is that to which our attention at present is to be directed. Like mechanism of the highest order, sometimes in works of skill, in others of power, which contains within its own frame-work, a complex apparatus, the effect of which is to nip any nascent irregularity, and to keep the result of the whole steady and uniform;—or, like the far mightier and far more complicated revolutions in the heavens, which are attended with such a variety of checks and counteractions, inherent in their course, that amidst many minute aberrations, which do occur, and for a time go on increasing, not one of them trespasses beyond a certain limit, whether pro-

gressive or retrograde ;—the Established Church of England and Ireland comprehends, though of course with far inferior accuracy and success, within the range of the skill and power of its moral machinery, and in the very nature of its own high and heavenly provisions, a special expedient for sometimes checking, at other times moderating and limiting disorders and defects, and, in short, for general purposes of self-preservation and self-improvement. That provision is her great PROVINCIAL SYNODS, commonly called CONVOCATIONS.

Let us take a summary view of the arguments for, and against, the revival of active and efficient Convocations.

1. *That revival is due to the Church by way of compensation.*—The advantage formerly secured to the Church by the provision, that all principal public Officers should be in full communion with her, and by the presumption, that even non-conformists, becoming members of Parliament, would agree to the *doctrinal* parts of her Articles,* and join in her forms of prayer, which are offered up in both Houses before the commencement of secular

* By the Toleration Act, 1 William and Mary, c. 18, Dissenting Ministers were to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles, except the 34th, 35th, and 36th, and part of the 20th ; and in case of Baptists, part of the 27th. It was presumed, that their hearers would approve of the same articles to the same extent.

business, has recently, by great legislative enactments, been clean disannulled; and various classes, avowedly hostile to her doctrines, nay even sometimes to her very existence, have been admitted into the national counsels. Now, what adequate compensation can be devised, except conceding to her the actual exercise of her inalienable privilege as a religious society, to regulate and improve her own *spiritual* concerns by means of a renewed and active Convocation;—as far as consists with the rights of the legislature, and with the King's supremacy? And shall this relief—this, as far as appears, only adequate relief,—be denied? The primary part of the national community, in the course of rapid movements, which were deemed needful for the general health, has been put out of joint, and cannot be wholly replaced; and shall not its own necessary adscititious apparatus be granted to it, in order to remedy the dislocation? The principal wheel of the political machine has been, by a new working system, driven out of *gear*, (so to speak;) and since it cannot be brought back exactly to its former position, shall not some safe and practical adjustment of other parts be contrived for the sake of restoring its proper use? We have heard of the elongation of a ship of the line by the midway splicing in of new planks; but what should we think of the shipwright, who,

besides this process, having amplified the stern, should leave the prow in the self-same state as before? And what judgment should we pass upon the misshapen, disproportionate combination?

Let then the EPISCOPAL ESTABLISHED CHURCH have her CONVOCATIONS, not only in name, but in reality. Let the Convocations not only meet, but sit and transact business, with all due and conscientious regard, under God, to the just prerogative of the King.

The Bishops and Clergy indeed, cannot now, as in times previous to 25th of Henry VIII. c. 19, commonly termed the Act of Submission, be assembled by the mere authority of the Archbishop. But why should the King's writ, granting to the Archbishop,—not the authority itself, which is the gift of CHRIST alone to his Church, but—leave to exert it at a particular time, especially at the commencement of every new Parliament, amount to little more than a bare recognition of their *right* to meet and act? Let his Majesty be petitioned to direct that the Convocation may *exercise* its right as often, and at such periods of time, as the good of the Church and Nation may require. Its exact assimilation to parliament, once advocated with too much bitterness, is quite out of the question; but let it be enabled to hold its consultations, if needful, from year to

year, on subjects on which both the Church and the community at large are jointly and vitally interested. The Convocation is farther confessedly prevented, ever since the Act of Submission, from agreeing to canons, that shall have any "*validity in law*," civil or ecclesiastical, unless the king, by "*his letters patent under the great Seal, shall allow, approve and confirm them*;" but there remains a wide field of causes for consultation, relative to grievances to be redressed and errors to be corrected, (*gravamina et reformatanda*,) on which the two Houses of Convocation, when duly empowered to proceed to business, may freely by known law and custom deliberate, and offer their petitions, as a synod, to the King, whether in person, or in council, or in parliament, as the case shall need; and may also agree to other acts, such as "*synodical letters, to which the royal licence is not necessary*."*

2. *The inactivity of former Convocations is not to the purpose at present.*—If we should, for argument's sake, concede, what

* Let those who too hastily deny the existence of such powers in the Church of England mark this; Mr. James, for instance; (see his *Dissent and the Church*, p. 34.) The still valid synodical character of the Convocation is ably proved by the author of the *Compleat History of Convocations* from 1356 to 1689. 2nd ed. 1730. See especially Appendix, c. 4. The above quotations in italics are from pp. 178, 182, being the language of the royal licence. See also p. 164, respecting petitions.

in fact ought probably on every ground of truth and justice to be controverted, that the virtual suppression of Convocations for more than a century past, since the censure of Bishop Hoadly's publications in 1717, has been wisely ordered; yet in times like these, who would urge the precedent? In times like these, whilst the papal Hierarchy hold their frequent meetings, the Church of Scotland its General Assembly, the Wesleyans their annual Conference, no man forbidding them;—nay, whilst the Independents have recently instituted and now hold annual meetings of their general Congregational Union,* (county associations they have established long ago,) in spite of the apparent incompatibility of such meetings with the very essence of Independency,—will his gracious Majesty deny to the Church, which he hath sworn to maintain for the whole nation's sake, the *bonâ fide* use of her legitimate Convocations?

* In the printed minutes of the third annual meeting of their Congregational Union in London, in May 1833, may be seen a draught of a petition to parliament, which they then, in their full council, prepared for “the *entire* removal of grievances,” and for sanctioning, in effect, the voluntary system. But the Bishops and Clergy, though they are assembled in Convocation at the meeting of each parliament, and though they may tender petitions, yet are not empowered to sit and debate at length upon them. Theirs must be *undiscussed* petitions! .

No doubt the disputes about the forms and observances, the rights and privileges of the two Houses, and the consequent party-feuds, which attended their deliberations in 1689, and from 1700, when they were again enabled to transact business, to 1717, (chiefly, it must be confessed, through the encroachments of the Lower House, not without some blameable state-policy, perhaps, in the Upper,) have brought lasting reproach upon the Clergy, and materially injured the righteous cause of the Church, and of Christianity itself. Hence, in regard to this subject, a deep and inveterate disgust has prevailed ever since among Statesmen, and we may add, among the Bishops and Clergy themselves. The few laymen, who are at all aware that there is such a thing as the actual opening of the Convocation with every new Parliament to this day, regard the whole as no more than a dead letter. In better informed minds, ideas of angry contention and discord have come to be associated with the very name of Convocation.—But is not this in part mere prejudice? Were there not exasperations of men's minds peculiar to those days, owing to an entire change of dynasty, and to the incessant machinations of Pretenders to the throne? And was not the Convocation, from causes specially affecting its members, more exposed than other great assemblies to a dis-

turbing, not to say tempestuous influence? As to the limits of the contested rights and privileges of the two Houses of Convocation, Bishop Warburton* intimates, that it is practicable to define them at the outset, with accuracy enough, to prevent the renewal of discord; and "*The Compleat History of Convocations*" furnishes a fund of registers and precedents, by which the requisite definitions may perhaps be permanently fixed.

And ought we to forget the many well-known instances, in which the Convocation rendered essential service to the Church and the Nation, by settling that standard-testimony of Protestant doctrine, which is exhibited in the Thirty-nine Articles; by originally discussing and deciding upon, and afterwards revising, the book of Common Prayer; by zealously promoting the translation and circulation of the Scriptures in our vernacular tongue; and by voluntarily surrendering, in 1665,† their right to tax themselves?

3. *The Civil Government of the present day need not feel jealousies and apprehensions respecting a general Convention of Churchmen.*—The Clergy in the main have held fast so much of

* "We may venture to affirm that synods convened and meeting on the principles here laid down," (i. e. in his book,) "cannot possibly be pernicious to the State, or fruitless to the Church."—*Alliance*, 3rd ed. p. 161.

† See Appendix, No. 1.

Protestantism in their character, as themselves to dread the danger which attends ecclesiastical Conventions; the danger, namely, of intermeddling with political measures, and grasping at political power. The simple fact, that unhappily the very idea of Convocation is for the most part unpopular among them, proves that such a dread does at present exist, and exist indeed to an excess, in their minds.* Though taunted from some quarters, more sharply now than ever, with fostering a fondness for spiritual domination, they show themselves fully sensible of this weak point. They seem to be well aware of the besetting temptations of great ecclesiastical bodies; and to desire that, in this respect, they may be nar-

* The influence however of prejudice, in regard to Convocations, seems to be giving way. The British Magazine has, in several late numbers, ably pleaded the cause of Convocations; and I have recently heard of influential clergymen, whose views are more or less changed in their favour. The Bishop of Lincoln, in his late Charge, has spoken of them cautiously indeed, but not altogether unfavourably. In the general meeting of the Clergy of the diocese of Gloucester, on the 14th of January, 1834, (at which were present, three Archdeacons, the Dean, and nearly a hundred Clergymen, the Archdeacon of the diocese presiding,) the revival of CONVOICATIONS is alluded to, both in their petition to the Sovereign, and in their address to the Bishop of the diocese; and in his answer to their address the Bishop approved of their proceedings.—(See the printed account, sold by Hatchard and other booksellers.)

rowly watched, and be studiously kept within their proper bounds by the King's prerogative, and by other duly subordinated constitutional powers. Is not the prerogative alone an ample security to any Government, against any attempt to pervert the Convocation into a political arena, or into an advanced post of annoyance? Will not the very consciousness, that they are dependent at all times upon the King's license for permission to meet, and by the King's writ may be prorogued or dissolved at any time, rivet them strictly to their proper church-business? And though severe restraints were necessary in former times, against the remains of papal *Independency*, and would be still necessary, if the spirit of non-conforming *Independency* should ever find its way into the Convocations, as well as its votaries into the Universities; yet is not the rigour of those restraints fairly mitigable under present circumstances, and in favour of a protestant communion so scripturally observant, under God, of the civil power, as the Church of England?* Or

* The equilibrium of Church and State, maintained pre-eminently well in theory by our Constitution, but since the Revolution at least not duly observed, we fear, in practice, is shown by Warburton, in his masterly way, to consist in a FÆDERAL UNION between the two great parties; partaking of the nature of what is called FÆDUS INÆQUALE, *quod manentem prælationem quandam alteri donat;—ut potentiore plus honoris, inferiori plus auxiliî deferatur.* He maintains, however, the

must an abstract, arbitrary power, which would not be dreamt of in regard to any other body, ecclesiastical or civil, be screwed down to its utmost tension upon that Church alone? At all events, will not the Government be satisfied with so full a preventive remedy, as the King's supremacy, against every thing approaching to *imperium in imperio*? Will they also, by discouraging the operation of an active Synod in the present times, when so many new and momentous questions in the civil legislature, sometimes encroaching upon, and scarcely ever wholly separate from the spiritual concerns of the Church, have been continually mooted;—when so many anomalous and unconstitutional, not to say unhallowed and unlawful discussions, have come on against her, like wave after wave against a ship in distress;—will they also openly reduce the Church in effect to an incorporation, or (what may better express the anomaly) impenetration, into the State; and so far seem to justify some of the bitterest reproaches, which other Communions have cast upon her? And is there nothing in the disposition of Churchmen of the present

glaring fallacy, as Paley does, that the magistrate has to do, not with truth at all, but only with utility; and consequently that the Establishment *ought* to veer about with the opinion of the majority, whether that opinion accords with, or contradicts, the Divine Standard of truth.—*Alliance*, pp. 88, 198, 247.

day,—in the disinterestedness of the Bishops on some trying occasions, in the meek endurance of the persecuted Irish Clergy, in the general abstinence of the Clergy, from the vehemence of party when they have been surrounded by it, in the increase of piety and learning among them, in their general character and conduct,—is there nothing in all these particulars, which warrants the expectation, that they would readily and materially lend their aid in all *really* salutary ecclesiastical proceedings? Would they not concur in public measures, calculated to augment the sacred efficiency and influence of the National Church, for the confirmation and maintenance of all, even of the Dissenters themselves, (whose good, I trust, they long after,) in sound scriptural faith and morals? Would they not probably enable Government to accomplish in the *lay-administrations* connected with our primitive church-polity solid improvements, which, without some prompt opportunity of consulting the collected wisdom and piety of the Bishops and Clergy, they could not attempt,—without invading the authority of CHRIST himself? Is not the want of Church-Councils manifest from statements that have been not long since publicly made in the most responsible quarters,—“such and such a measure respecting the Church is approved by the Clergy;”—and

soon afterwards, on further inquiry, recalled, with the avowal,—“ it is, after all, *not* approved by them?”—Is it not manifest also from the question asked at another time,—“ Do the Heads of the Church concur?”—and from the answer returned,—“ No authority has been given to say either that they concur, or the contrary?”—The fact is, the great body of the Clergy, even when chiefly interested, have no means whatever, *as a body*, of receiving, or responding to, proposed inquiries concerning their sentiments, but by their legitimate representatives in CONVOCATION.

4. *If the foregoing remarks possess any weight, they become tenfold more important under the immediate circumstances of this Church and Nation.*—Many extraordinary and concurrent causes,—in some persons a righteous and holy desire of improvement, in others an unmeaning recklessness of change, or a precipitance of innovation; in others false philosophy, rationalism, and an avowed zeal for revolutionizing the country; and in general the combined effect of these varied feelings upon the public mind, under the still farther exciting influence of great political changes, felt, feared, or hoped for,—these and such-like causes have conducted, perhaps hurried, the government, the clergy, and the people, up to the very point of immediately ex-

pected and extensive Church Reforms.—At such a crisis, who have such a clear right to be allowed an opportunity of adequately expressing their sentiments on subjects vitally affecting themselves, as the legitimate representatives of the Clergy? And how can they *adequately* express them, except in Convocation? Who are better qualified from their office, and we may add, (though ashamed to boast thus,) from their studies and attainments *as a body*, to discriminate accurately between the reality and the often-abused name of Church Reform; between such healing measures as are superficial and tentative, and such as will go into the system; between such as are specious, and such as are safe and genuine? What class of men do actually distribute—I will not say to an adequate extent, it is far otherwise after all, but — (I speak again as a fool)—so largely, in proportion to their income, for purposes of charity, as the great body of the Bishops and Presbyters of the Church of England; proving thereby that they would not be withheld by any mercenary considerations from supporting plans of *genuine* church-amelioration, even when attended with sacrifices to themselves? Who are more directly interested in the success of all *such* plans, as eminently conducive to their spiritual usefulness throughout

the nation, to say nothing of their own purest temporal satisfaction, than the nationally sanctioned ministers of CHRIST? Who are better suited, or better disposed, to assist by their opinions, whensoever required, the Civil Government in maturing *such* plans, than the generality of the Clergy? With their aid, what diffusive and substantial good may not wise statesmen accomplish in behalf of this Church and Nation? Without their aid, what merely spiritual improvement must not the civil powers relinquish, or, if they attempt, must not desecrate?—And if any such attempt be made now, what admissible precedent for it can be discovered in all the past history of this country? In what single imitable instance, since the Reformation, has any extensive change been effected in the spiritual affairs of the Church—in her Articles, Sacraments, Liturgy, Ordination-Services, Internal Discipline,—without the suggestion or concurrence of the CONVOCATION?

The *royal injunctions*, relative to spiritual matters, issued by Henry VIII. and Edward VI., whilst as yet the King's supremacy involved arbitrary powers;—and afterwards by Elizabeth and her immediate successors, exercising little short of arbitrary powers, by means of the High Commission Court,—have not been, and could not be, considered valid precedents, ever since

all such absolute claims, whether of spiritual supremacy, or of high commission-jurisdictions, have merged in the more paternal sway of our limited monarchy? As to *ecclesiastical commissions or royal orders*, those which took place under Henry VIII. and Edward VI. when the prerogative of the Crown was unbounded ;—(for instance, in 1532, (25 Hen. VIII.) for reviewing the Canons ; in 1536, for the translation of the Bible ; in 1537 and 1540, respectively, for preparing the *Institution*, and the *Necessary Erudition, of a Christian man* ; in 1539, for drawing up Articles of Religion ; in 1540, for examining the Rituals of the Church ; in 1542, for completing the translation of the Bible, which was then committed to the Universities ; in 1548 and 1551, (2 and 5 Edw. VI.) for examining and reforming the offices of the Church, followed by the two Acts of Uniformity establishing the two Service Books, or books of Common Prayer, drawn up in those two respective years ; in 1551, for preparing the Ordination Service ;)—even these ecclesiastical commissions, and much more those in subsequent times, when arbitrary measures were less frequent, though sometimes loosely spoken of in authentic documents, as if appointed by the sovereign, may be shown by a fuller investigation of authorities, to have been either originally solicited by CONVO-

CATIONAL PETITIONS to the king, or to have consisted of members of the then sitting CONVOCATION, and to have acted in the name and with the delegated authority of CONVOCATION, under the royal sanction or appointment, or to have ultimately submitted their acts to the judgment of CONVOCATION.*

* Atterbury, (afterwards Bishop of Rochester,) in answer to Wake's first book, (who became Archbishop of Canterbury,) on the *Authority of Christian Princes over their ecclesiastical Synods*, furnishes *seriatim* distinct proofs of these points in opposition to Wake, who ascribes the above-mentioned Ecclesiastical Commissions more or less to the appointment of the King. Atterbury shows at large, in regard to various other spiritual matters, such as the composition of homilies, that the same kind of duly ordered deference to the ministers of CHRIST was scrupulously maintained. — Atterbury on the *Rights, Powers, and Privileges of an English Convocation*, 2nd edition, pp. 181—210.

Wake, in his *Authority of Christian Princes*, confesses, p. 8, that "in our English Laws and Antiquities, he was not fully skilled." In his subsequent voluminous work, *on the State of the Church and Clergy of England*, in answer to Atterbury, he had acquired a deeper acquaintance with that part of his subject, and pursued it even to exhaustion. He himself admits, (Pref. Edition 1703, p. 3,) that in his former work, "the historical facts are not always correct," and moderates his former statements concerning the extent of the royal prerogative on the one hand, and of the deliberative privileges of the Convocation on the other. But he has succeeded, I conceive, in proving, contrary to his adversary's notions, that a distinction must be drawn between *Parliamentary Conventions*, Pro-

The most remarkable exception seems to have occurred in the first year of James I. when that monarch having first required the Archbishop and others to review the Book of Common Prayer,—(who in consequence enlarged the office of private baptism, and added rubrics, several occasional prayers, and the part of the catechism containing the doctrine of the Sacraments,)—issued his Commission to authorize the use of the Common Prayer thus altered; which accordingly continued in force till 14 Charles II., when, after a new revision by the Convocation, it was duly enacted by Parliament.* But such an unprecedented, unexampled stretch of prerogative, directed to the Court of the High Commissioners, long since extinct, it is obvious enough, will not by any one be advocated at the present day.

vincial Convocations, and Provincial Councils, and that in matter of fact, even from 25 Henry VIII. to James II., Convocations in various instances, besides that of 1640, have *not* been uniformly attendant upon Parliament. I have *searched* through this bulky volume, without pretending to have nearly read the whole of it, in order to discover what he might have opposed to Atterbury's assertions concerning the connection of the above-mentioned Ecclesiastical Commissions with the Convocation; but I have found nothing on the subject. He refers indeed in his preface, p. 13, to Kennett's *Ecclesiastical Synods, &c., in the Church of England*, p. 70; but on examining Kennett also, I find nothing to the purpose. Those assertions may be therefore regarded as confirmed by his silence.

* Atterbury, *Rights, &c.* p. 419.

5. *The oppressiveness of the responsibility, laid exclusively on our Prelates, at this crisis in particular, is a strong argument why they should be relieved by the aid of a general synod.* —“A courteous way,” it may be insinuated, “of reflecting on their competency, and supplanting their province of consulting for the interest of the true religion of CHRIST in these realms!” But,—in very awe of their episcopal dignity we say it,—not their province alone. For where can the Bishops guide or counsel others in spiritual things more efficiently, or more honourably;—where can their mitres become brighter *insignia* of their office, as the “servants of all,” and so “chiefest of all,” than in solemn convention with their Presbyters, superior and inferior? And it is only a pleasing vision to anticipate, that from such common conferences, there may result both dignity to their character as Fathers in the family of CHRIST, and substantial good to the common cause of His truth and His Church among the people?

It may be said indeed with truth, that a Convocation, transacting real business at this time, would at first be unpopular among some classes of the community, as if tending to spiritual faction; and would be unsparingly derided by sceptics and infidels, as a burlesque upon religion, and I know not what. But should his Ma-

jesty allow to the Bishops and Clergy the opportunity of consulting together in Convocation, is there no hope that many, perhaps the great majority of them, would meet really "in the name of the Lord JESUS," and in reliance on the promised "SPIRIT of their GOD," and with the prayers of their own people, and likewise of serious and impartial Christians of other denominations? Is there no possibility that the Bishops and the Clergy, so assembled, might feel a new elevating power in the present momentous times, and consentaneously exhibit, in regard to their too hastily triumphing adversaries and their own poorly provided brethren, acts of sound Christian self-denial, which might, under God, ultimately bring back to the Church and to true Religion, the cold or the alienated affections of many in the land?

6. *Objections drawn from mere selfish views are of little weight.*—There is in some clergymen's minds an indistinct sort of reluctance, of which they are perhaps themselves scarcely conscious, towards church-councils, and which proceeds possibly no farther than a whisper among their friends. Were they to speak out, one would say,—"My party will, I fear, not be numerous in the Convocation;"—another,—“Mine, though numerous, will not in these days have due weight.”—But should these fears be realized,

that is the very thing to be desired, a comparative neutralizing of *pure* party interests. And, though, alas! human sins and sorrows will find their way thither, and many failures will occur, and party feelings will sometimes arise;—though even an altogether holy Assembly would still tread in the splashes of those troubled pools, in which unrenewed men are overwhelmed;—yet one cannot but hope with Professor Pusey, in his late vindication of cathedral institutions, “that greater theological knowledge,” (such as Convocations might most advantageously foster,) “would promote greater union in the Church.” Indeed his own scriptural language and spirit may fairly be hailed as a token, under the blessing of God, of some progress already towards union, by the interposition of a purer and better theology; and as a pledge, that joint efforts upon a large scale, in behalf of sacred learning and true piety, would allay “the differences which now sorely hinder the cordial co-operation of her two great parties.” (pp. 30, 31.)

It has been objected, that the members of our Church Synods will not be sufficiently evangelical and spiritual.—What are we to understand by this? That neither the generality, nor indeed more than a very small minority, will be spiritual men? But are we ourselves spiritual in the frame of mind, wherein all at once we

dart at so positive a conclusion? Let us but judge ourselves sharply, others in the spirit of that charity, which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," in order "that we be not ourselves judged of the Lord;" and we shall at least hope more favourably, till overt proof to the contrary be forced upon us. Nay, we shall *in limine* hope more favourably from the known fact, that a fervent, sound-minded zeal for the standard faith and holiness of the Gospel, has been and is increasing in this country, (though too feebly, yet beyond the experience of former times, perhaps ever since the blessed Reformation,) especially among the pastors of CHRIST in the Established Church of England and Ireland; whose piety therefore must needs operate *within*, proportionably to its degree of prevalence *without*, the CONVOCATION.

7. To have done with objections,—we would observe next, that *weighty examples and authorities may be adduced in behalf of Convocations*.—Is it not an adequate answer once for all, to whatever difficulties may be raised, to allege the example of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH of Scotland? Does it not hold its meetings annually by the King's licence? And with all its acknowledged imperfections, and though not exempt from the intrusion of party-spirit, does

it not contribute, without the alloy of political ferment, and inoffensively as far as concerns the State, substantial aid to the discipline of its own Church, and to the cause of true religion in general ; of which it has recently afforded more than one decided proof?

The example too of the PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN AMERICA, may be appealed to ;—the necessary allowances being made for the peculiarity of its situation, as *wholly* self-governed, surrendering none of its internal transferable rights, and receiving no extrinsic succour in order to its diffusion through the land. Thus circumstanced, they regularly hold a triennial general Convention of the whole Church, consisting of clerical and lay representatives from each diocese. These form the Lower House, and the Bishops the Upper House. “The Bishops have a *veto* upon the proceedings of the Lower House, but are required to assign their reasons. Entire freedom of debate takes place.” And the point particularly to our purpose is this, that “however keen the discussions may be, (and there have been sometimes very keen ones,) the minority have hitherto peaceably acquiesced from a high sense of duty.”

But to take still higher grounds.—God himself, by his apostles, ordained the COUNCIL at

JERUSALEM, as recorded in Acts xv., and has consequently shadowed out there a sufficient representation, although he did not see fit to give a full and exact prescript, of what He intended for his Church in after ages.* So the primitive Church understood it, for there were Councils in many places at different periods, long before Constantine ;—as in Palestine, Rome, Pontus, Gaul, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor, respecting the time of keeping Easter, in the second century ;—in various places of Asia against the Montanists, and about the rebaptising heretics, still in the second century ;—also in Rome, Carthage, Antioch, and in various parts of Cappadocia, in the third century.* The right therefore, indeed the obligation, to consult in a collective capacity by sacred Synods, has been bequeathed by a crucified REDEEMER,—(“ He is Lord of all,”)—to his Church, in order to her faithful accomplishment of His purposes in her essential internal Discipline, Doctrines, and Services ; so that for the civil power to extinguish, or wholly to suppress, such ecclesiastical Councils, would scarcely seem less treasonable against the sovereignty of CHRIST, than to invade the administration of His Sacraments. The sense of Scripture on the subject is summed

* See also the COUNCIL at MILETUS, of St. Paul and the Elders from Ephesus, in Acts xx.

† See Appendix No. 2.

up in the 37th and 20th Articles of the Church of England, as follows;—"Where we attribute to the King's majesty the chief government, we give not to our princes the ministering either of God's Word or of the Sacraments; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly princes, in Holy Scriptures, by God himself, that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal." On the other hand, although "it is unlawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written;" yet "the Church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith." Indeed, to speak of a Society without its consultations, of a Christian Society without its Synod, is almost a contradiction in terms. A national Church, which has absolutely lost its ecclesiastical Councils, will soon probably become, if it be not already,

"ingens litore truncus,

Avulsumque humeris caput, et sine nomine corpus."

It differs but little from a body decomposed, and without a distinct subsistence.—Let us then humbly solicit our earthly Sovereign to grant an active, but at the same time constitutionally regulated, CONVOCATION. Let us hope and pray, that

the convened Bishops and Pastors, trusting wholly in Him, who "searcheth the reins and hearts," and whose name is "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS," will, according to His promise, be with them to bless them; and by their means to bless this whole Church and Nation.

8. *The influence, too, of such a Convocation would be brought to bear with a weight peculiarly its own, upon the correction of abuses, as far as they really exist, and upon the increase of usefulness, in the Establishment;—*I do not say, upon Church Reform, lest I should be misunderstood. For I cannot help suspecting, that the plausible term has come to us insidiously from the machinations of popery; whose well-known calumny it is, that ours is no Reformed Church at all, but a mere Law-Church, and needs to be reformed anew. But chiefly is the *term* objectionable, because Church Reform in the nomenclature of great numbers at the present day, avowedly means the crippling, and mutilating, and despoiling, and may even comprize the total subversion, of the Church Establishment.--And in regard to actual projects for its amelioration, as numerous almost as talkers on the subject, conscious of my imperfect acquaintance with points so singularly difficult, and wondering at the celerity of the process with which each specula-

tor springs to his own conclusions ;—I have felt much at a loss to conceive how such projects can be either set aside, or adopted, or otherwise disposed of, under *present* circumstances. Some of them the legislature cannot handle, without first setting itself “in the temple of God, showing itself that it is God.” Nor does it seem right to refer the whole burden of deciding upon these various schemes to those whose station and experience, as Church-governors, best qualify them to judge. Indeed the Bishops themselves have no idea apparently that the task is properly and definitively theirs ; for never, I apprehend, do they *all* meet *simply*, and for the *sole* and *sufficiently avowed* purpose of mutual conference and concert. Besides, when they do *all* meet by a kind of rule, it is understood to be but during a part of one day in the year ;—for weighty consultations, affecting the whole Church and Nation ! Besides, for the Bishops to sit in Parliament “is [only] a privilege by usage annexed to the episcopal dignity within this realm ; not to their order, which they acquire by consecration ; nor to their persons, for in respect to their persons they are not barons, nor to be tried as barons ;—but to their incorporation and dignity episcopal.” So that they do not sit there as *representatives*, but as *agents* of the Church, to

carry on a mutual intercourse of good offices between the Church and the Civil Power.*— But, *δος που εω και τον κοσμον κινησω*,—grant well-ordered CONVOCATIONS, really representing and comprehending the collected wisdom, piety, and practical knowledge of the Bishops and Clergy, and then the most arduous and *really* necessary questions might be grappled with, which could not otherwise be touched;—then definitive measures might be proposed in pursuance of the wishes, or for the approbation, of the King, and the Parliament, as the case might require, and as the limits justly prescribed to ecclesiastical Councils might direct.

We should then be able to say to those beginners in zealous, but misguided piety, whose minds have been perverted by modern abuses of the study of prophecy, and whose feelings have been over-excited by the consequent delusion;—who deal largely, like the Montanists of old in indiscriminate denunciations against the whole visible Church, including all the Protestant Churches, and particularly the Church of England, and who seem to be on the point of

* Judge Hale, quoted by Warburton, *Alliance*, pp. 132, 160.—According to Wake, they are the *remnant* of the Third Estate of the Realm, which originally consisted of the Bishops and *Clergy* sitting in Parliament.—*State of the Church*, &c. p. 80.

coming out, (as they say,) from this Babylon, and being separate,—we should be able to say to them, —“Wait;—here is the proper Court of reference ; here such objections as yours against our Liturgy and Church-polity, it is but fair to say, may be fully sifted to your own satisfaction, some answered from Scripture, others greatly modified ; —wait the result, before you take the fatal plunge.” We should also be able to say to many professed friends of protestant Dissent, but, with grief, I add our adversaries, and to their anti-protestant allies from the ranks of Popery and Rationalism, co-operating, if not actually combined, with them for the destruction of our Protestant Establishments, on the avowed pretence of their being public pests, instead of public benefits ;—“before you pass sentence even to excision, let the Established Church of England be heard in her own defence ; till *now*, she could not, for the last hundred years, *as a church*, vindicate herself ; now she can speak out by her legitimate representatives ; see whether the CONVOCATION is not both competent and willing to meet your accusations with a careful, but a meek and forbearing spirit ; perhaps able to manifest practically in her dealings with you, by the grace of GOD, a sound scriptural faith and feeling, that might fairly abate the sharpness of your hostility to her union with the State.”

N. B.—By *orthodox views, pure, standard, scriptural views*, of the Gospel, and the like expressions, wheresoever they occur in this chapter, or elsewhere in these pages, are meant those doctrines, which are fairly derived from Scripture alone;—which relate to the SALVATION from ETERNAL RUIN of PENITENT BELIEVERS by the SOLE redeeming love of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, THREE PERSONS and ONE GOD;—which are exhibited in the Creeds, and expounded in the Articles, of the Church of England;—and which were in the main acknowledged by the Apostolical and Primitive, and by the early Protestant, Churches.

CHAPTER II.

What is meant by the Convocation? What are its powers and rights? In what way are its proceedings to be conducted?

LET the dormant CONVOCATION be revived, let not any strange and remodelled Convocation be started *de novo*. The rage for innovation is dangerous enough, as it affects the State and the Country at large; if, at the very outset, it should break in upon the councils of the Church, the consequences would probably be tenfold more mischievous. If, indeed, *in process of time* any well-devised measures could be adopted (besides resuscitating the Convocations of the provinces of Canterbury and York,) for reviving also a Convocation in the Irish branch of our united Established Church, and for maintaining the necessary union between the three Convocations of Canterbury, York, and Ireland,—this probably would be a desirable

consummation. But all precipitate, and all gratuitous innovations, however specious in theory, are in practice so dangerous, and by the very nature of the case so empirical, and in their tendency, to say the least, so hurtful, that, I should suppose, they ought not to be thought of for a moment. Indeed nothing, it should seem, in the first instance, ought to be attempted, except calling into full operation the Convocations of Canterbury, and York, and Ireland; in rigid accordance with the civil constitution, and with the known laws and customs of this realm, and with all due obedience to the royal prerogative.

For the purpose of reviving Convocations, it will not be thought necessary to renew minutely that search for precedents, which the convocation-controversy a century ago occasioned, into the Saxon annals, when the regal authority, though not arbitrary, was as yet irregular and undefined;—nor into records of papal usurpation, when the clergy lorded it over the sovereign himself;—much less into the arbitrary measures of the eastern emperors. It may suffice to bear in mind the following *data*.—1. *Provincial Assemblies* are to be distinguished from *National* and *General Church councils*; the two latter kinds, from their very nature and magnitude, being very properly, in

many circumstantial, dependent on the mere will of the prince or emperor.* Provincial Synods, were decreed to be held twice every year, by the great Council of Nice, and by other Councils not long afterwards; and once every year, by subsequent General Councils in still early times, as well as by the imperial code of Justinian. On this account, and moreover in consequence of their necessarily limited aim, Provincial Synods were left much less subject to the civil power.—2. Under our Saxon princes, great *State-councils*, of which the superior Clergy *properly* and *necessarily* formed a part, and at which members of the inferior Clergy were *sometimes* present, became very frequent; and Provincial Synods were only held on extraordinary occasions.—3. After the Norman Conquest, the same kind of *mixed* National Councils of clergy and laity were for some time still customary; but when the papal encroachments began to prevail over the monarchy, they were in a great measure again superseded by Provincial Synods.—4. At length Edward I., in order to secure more ample subsidies, summoned the Commons, temporal and spiritual, to his PARLIAMENT, and sent his Royal

* The ensuing historical facts, to p. 40, are taken chiefly from Atterbury's work, pp. 67, 69, 216, 243—248, 251, 306, 418—494, 667; collated in a general way with the *Compleat History of Convocations*, and Wake's *Authority*, &c., and *State of the Church*.

Writ for that purpose, not only to the Bishops, but also, through the Bishops, to their respective Clergy, who were then first required to elect two of their own number, as proctors, to attend the Parliament. As the Writ thus issued contained the term *præmunientes*, (*premonishing* the inferior clergy,) it came to be known by that name. In consequence, however, of the reluctance of the papal Clergy to be subject to mere regal authority, Edward II. issued, for revenue-purposes still, together with the *præmunientes* his Royal Writ to the Archbishop; desiring him to call together, by his archiepiscopal Writs to the Bishops, concurrently with the Parliament, the Bishops and Clergy of his province,—(at the rate still of two proctors for each diocese, with one proctor besides for each chapter, and with these, the Dignitaries inferior to Bishops,)—in a PROVINCIAL CONVOCATION—whence THE CONVOCATION, in subsequent times. The diocesan proctors were consequently returned in a double capacity, to act both as members of the PARLIAMENTARY CONVENTION, and as members of the PROVINCIAL CONVOCATION, (and sometimes two different persons were elected for these two different purposes,) though they ceased to *act* as members of parliament after the close of the reign of Edward III.—5. Since the time of Henry VIII. the writ *præmunientes*, though

statedly issued, has no longer been formally executed; and the Clergy, (with the exception of the Bishops,) when called to Convocation, have only *nominally* constituted, or only been *liable* to constitute, one of the *three estates of the realm*. From the time of Henry VIII., however, to the Revolution, the Convocation has been usually summoned, and dissolved also, within a short time of the meeting and dissolution of Parliament, the Convocation of 1640 being the most marked exception. But, with Royal Licence, it anciently has been, and still may be, summoned at other times.—6. For many reigns after the Conquest, the Clergy in Synod sat together, as did the civil members of the National Council. About the close of the third Edward's reign, some time after the Commons had separated from the Lords in Parliament, the Convocation was divided into its two Houses: though there is no formal mention of the Lower House of Convocation till some time afterwards. The first distinct notice of the title of Prolocutor of the Lower House in the registers of Convocation, is in the Convocation of the 18th of November, 1415. After the actual separation into the two Houses, they sometimes treated and passed resolutions in one body; but mostly by means of a joint committee of both Houses. And as to the proper character of the PROVINCIAL CONVOCATIONS, though originally called chiefly

for purposes of revenue, they were soon regularly used for religious objects, superseding, in fact, and combining in themselves, the designs both of Parliamentary Convocations, and Provincial Councils.—7. We have already observed, that in borrowing our views of what the Convocation is, or ought to be, from the Saxon times, or from the era when Popery was rampant in these kingdoms, much caution in the use of precedents is necessary. The same observation is applicable to subsequent periods. For even after the Reformation, there are some differences between the political circumstances of the nation, in the early and later and present periods, which ought to be taken carefully into our account. The title of Supreme Head, as far as it involved those absolute spiritual powers, which were understood to belong to it, when first given to Henry VIII., was taken away in the first of Queen Mary; and in the first of Elizabeth, the chief power in all *causes* and all spiritual *jurisdiction* having been declared to be still annexed to the imperial crown of this realm, the queen was enabled to exercise these rights by Commissioners. But the High Commission Court was abolished in 16 Carol. I. chap. 11; and after the attempt to revive it by James II., has been solemnly condemned by the Declaration of Rights, at the Revolution, as one cause of the Abdication. And

now the spiritual jurisdiction, which still continues annexed to the Crown, can only be exercised, in matters not already acknowledged to belong to the royal prerogative, by the King in Parliament.

Taking, then, for the proper standards the registers of Convocations held *since* the Reformation, that is, since the Act of Submission in the reign of Henry VIII., (though generally the accounts we have of them are but abridgments of the originals, which were burnt in the great fire of London,) and bearing in mind the modern character of our limited monarchy,—we may hope the usages and rights of Convocation, and also the subordination owed by the Lower to the Upper House, may be ascertained sufficiently for all practical purposes. Now that the angry passions, excited by controversy and by peculiar jealousies, have so long ago subsided, it may be possible, at the outset, to form a fair and stedfast judgment concerning the details of convocational business, on Church-of-England principles. Particularly the registers of the Upper House, in 1562, when the Thirty-nine Articles were agreed upon; in 1640, when the Canons were made under Archbishop Laud; and in 1661, when the Common Prayer was revised, and the four following years,—(all of which registers happen to be preserved entire,)—on being compared with the

registers of the Lower House, in 1586 and 1588, which have been also preserved,—will furnish us with specimens of the requisite precedents. Archbishop Parker's "*Form or Description of Celebrating the Convocation, as it has been used to be observed from Old Time,*" will supply a brief summary.*

In the first instance, however, the *act of parliament* of the 25th of Henry VIII., consequent upon the clergy's submission, must be carefully complied with, on pain of a *præmunire*; by which act the Archbishop is restrained from calling the Clergy of his province together at his own option, as he had been always previously accustomed to do, and often, in popish times, for mischievous ends. The Archbishop cannot now, without the King's writ of licence, issue his writ of summons to his suffragan Bishops; and the CONVOCATION, when assembled in consequence,—1. cannot actually proceed to business without receiving the royal permission and the King's proposal of subjects, if there be any, either by *word* of mouth from the Archbishop, or by another royal *writ*, to that purpose;—2. cannot *enact*, nor *confer* in order to *enact* any canon, of themselves, nor, without the

* See full copies of these registers, with a list of other remaining registers, from 1356 to 1689, in the *Compleat History of Convocations*. Parker's *Form* is at the end of the Register of 1562.

King's sanction under the great seal ;—3. cannot *promulge* it, when *enacted*, without the same sanction ;—nor, 4. can the canon become the law of the land, unless it be adopted by act of parliament.*—But the Bishops and Clergy in Convocation are *not* hindered, when duly licensed and called to business, from discussing any purely church subject, nor from freely treating about, nor from agreeing simply among *themselves* even respecting canons ; nor from discussing any questions, *besides* those proposed by the king, which are connected with the spiritual welfare and utility of the Church, that is, with the whole nation's dearest and most important interests.†

* See the whole question of the Submission of the Clergy to Henry VIII., amply detailed in the 10th chapter of Wake's second work, viz., that on *the State of the Church and Clergy*.

† The Convocation does not appear to have ever received a written licence under the *broad seal*, authorising them to *treat* or *confer* about canons, till the 2nd of James I., A. D. 1603. And that which was *then* granted does not seem to have been, properly speaking, a licence simply to *treat*, but to treat for the express purpose of authoritatively “agreeing to, and upon” canons. The Convocation in 1597 *treated and agreed to canons* without any such *written* licence from Queen Elizabeth. Even in 1603, the Convocation had transacted *other* synodical business for three weeks previous to the issuing of the King's writ respecting canons. In 1640, when Charles I. gave his licence, “*ut ipsi inter se convenirent et mature excogitarent—de Canonibus, et constitutionibus — concipiendis*,” the Convocation proceeded to *other* matters, as in the 10th session to articles for [epis-

With sure matter-of-fact directories of this kind, we shall not be wholly at a loss in tracing the proper dependence of the Lower House upon the Upper, in order to preserve unity of counsel, in their mutual intercourse, according to the polity of the Church of England.—The Archbishop, after his receipt of the King's writ, directs his mandate to the Bishop of London, as dean of his province, to convoke *personally* before him, in such a place as his grace shall see fit, "all, and singular, the suffragan Bishops of his province, and by them the Deans of cathedral and collegiate Churches; the Archdeacons and other Prelates of cathedral churches, exempt and not exempt," and also to convoke before him, "every chapter of cathedral and collegiate Churches *by one*, and the clergy of every diocese *by two*, sufficient proctors or proxies."* On the day of their assembling, which since the Reformation has taken place in copal] visitations, and formularies for consecrating churches, &c. In the register of 1661, there is no mention of any *written* licence for the treating about the revision of the Liturgy, nor for any other purpose. Nevertheless, in the 63rd session, the President and Bishops even appointed a committee for revising the *canons* of 1640, and in other sessions entered into various other subjects, as in the 113th, when the *Form of Consecration of Churches* was again considered.—See the whole Registers in the *Compleat History*, and also Atterbury's *Rights*, &c. p. 427, &c.

* See the mandates of the Archbishop in 1562, and 1661,

the choir of the cathedral of St. Paul's, London ;
the Archbishop, as president of the whole Convo-

in the *Compleat History*. The number of the members is
as follows :—

Upper House.

Prelates	.	.	.	22
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Lower House.

Deans	.	.	.	.	22
Archdeacons	.	.	.	.	53
Proctors of Chapters	.	.	.	.	24
Diocesan Proctors	.	.	.	.	44

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Among the official numbers as above stated, it is not, I conceive, too much to say, that their general character, especially if compared with their predecessors for a long time past, stands high.

As to suggestions of improvement in the Constitution of the Convocation, I cannot help subjoining the following quotation from Bishop Kennett. " I must needs wish that the parochial Clergy in England were more equally and fully represented in our Convocation ; that their Proctors in the Lower House might be at least a balance to the other dignified Presbyters, and not be exceeded by them more than one half ; an inequality that I doubt was fatal when the Clergy, as within memory, taxed themselves. Possibly it will more become the wisdom and consciences of Churchmen to solicit for some amendments and improvements in the Constitution of our English Synods, than to call fiercely for such alone as are not altogether so full, nor altogether so effectual."—See his book on *the Case of Impropriations*.—p. 196.

cation, reads prayers, and with the assistance of his co-bishops, administers the Holy Communion; and some member of the Convocation, whether belonging to the Upper or Lower House, elected for this purpose, preaches a Latin sermon. Afterwards, the Bishops and all the Clergy follow the Archbishop into the chapter room, and the Archbishop and Bishops being seated, and the rest of the clergy standing round, the Bishop of London presents to the Archbishop the *mandate* of summons, with a *certificatory* of the Clergy's returns. Then the Archbishop pronounces, from a schedule put into his hands, all those persons *contumacious*, who shall not have appeared there at that day and hour, reserving their punishment by church censures to some future day, according to his good pleasure. Next, the Archbishop explains to the Bishops and Clergy "the causes of his having come to them, and of the Convocation now begun," comprehending the communication, whether *oral* or *written*, from the sovereign. Then the Archbishop exhorts the Clergy of the Lower House, consisting of "the deans, archdeacons, masters of colleges, and proctors of the cathedrals, and of the diocesan clergy," to retire to the Lower House, and to choose for themselves, (and on the next day of session to present to himself, for confirmation

and approbation,) their *Referendary* or *Prolocutor*. The office of the Prolocutor is to admonish all that they do not depart from London without the Archbishop's leave; to prevent confusion in their debates; to collect the votes; to "speak as the one mouth and organ of all the rest;" and to "report the opinion in which they shall have agreed to the Archbishop, when he (the Prolocutor) shall have been desired, or sent, to discharge this duty." In the *next* session, the Archbishop, after the presentation and approbation of the Prolocutor, "expounds his farther pleasure, by exhorting the clergy, that they consult and report *on a stated day* concerning the common matters, which need reformation." And in this manner the Convocation shall be *continued*, that is, adjourned from one day to another appointed by the archbishop, until the royal writ shall be received by the president for *proroguing* or *dissolving* it.

After any matter has been agreed to severally by the two Houses, the Prolocutor and the Lower House are sent for to the Upper, and there it is passed into a synodical act. "Since the Reformation, articles of religion, canons, and constitutions have been ever passed by subscription; but instruments of other kinds, such as synodical letters, &c. have been enacted with the consent

of the bishops and clergy, by the hand and seal of the Archbishop, which was properly his sanction.*

We can determine, farther, from the documents above mentioned, (discarding all ideas of sufficient analogy between Convocation and Parliament, to serve as the basis of sound judgment,) what are in the main the correlative offices and rights of the Higher and Lower Houses of Convocation.—It belongs to the Archbishop, as president, after examination to admit or deny proxies in the *latter* as well as in the former;—to adjourn the *whole* Convocation of the prelates and clergy, first by his own word of mouth in the Upper House, and then by *intimation* or *signification*, usually on a written schedule, delivered through the prolocutor to the Lower;—and not only to declare the causes of the Convocation at its commencement, but to point out, in conjunction with the Bishops during its continuance, *any* particular business to the clergy. It belongs to the President and Bishops to order *committees* of the Lower House, specifying the number of members to be chosen or not, as they think best, but in all cases leaving it to the Lower House to choose the individuals;—to prescribe a time for the return of business committed to the clergy, and, in case of

* *Compleat Hist.* p. 178.

their failure, to grant a longer term at the clergy's request;—to require, if they deem it expedient, the answers of the Lower House in *writing*;—and to call to their assistance, when necessary, persons learned in the laws of the land.

The Lower House have a right to present their own and the Church's *grievances* (*gravamina*) to the President and Bishops; who, if they approve of the statements laid before them, would adopt suitable measures respecting them either in Convocation, or by conveyance of them to the King in person, or in council, or in parliament; to make general representations to the President and Bishops of *such things as they conceive want reformation*, (*reformanda*,) or individually to lay before them particular schedules of abuses, with a view to their being *reformed*, either by diocesan jurisdiction, or by application to the king or the parliament;—and to petition the President and Bishops in favour of all such measures as may in their opinion tend to the promotion of true religion, such as the more strict execution of *discipline*.* Petitions may be addressed also to the Convocation by any of the clergy or laity, respecting spiritual matters, as to a solemn Court

* As in the Convocation of 1586.—See the *Compleat History*, p. 167.

of appeal or reference. These rights used to be exercised as long as the Clergy taxed themselves, that is, till the year 1665, at the time of passing their subsidies; but the same rights still remain in force, and may be exercised at any period of the Convocation.—The Lower House have a right to debate freely on the various subjects, which come under their consideration.—They have also a negative upon the Metropolitan and Bishops, none of whose resolutions, either in part or in the whole, can be passed into synodical acts without the previous approbation of the inferior Clergy.

It has been thought desirable by many, that lay-members should be chosen to sit with the clergy in Convocation. Certainly in the synods of the primitive Church there are instances of laymen sitting and voting.* But this is not the present law of the Church of England, nor of the Nation. Only the rules and precedents of our Church allow of the King's sending his representative or commissioner to the Upper House, in order to superintend the proceedings of the whole Convocation; and ecclesiastical lawyers have been statedly present, and may be often called in for consultation in the Upper

* "There appears to be much the same reason, (says Warburton,) for laymen's sitting in Convocation, as for churchmen [bishops] in parliament."—*Alliance*, p. 160.

House.* These limited admissions of laymen, together with the vigilance sure to be exerted by the Parliament, seem to form a sufficient security to lay-members of the Church, and to the country at large, that no measures will be attempted by the Convocation injurious to the people's personal rights and privileges, temporal or spiritual; or in any way at variance with the righteous claims of conscience, and of civil and religious liberty.

I have thrown together here some miscellaneous particulars, referring to the topics of this chapter.

The bitterness of men's minds, when the disputes ran high in the Convocation a century ago, was such as can scarcely be expected to occur again. By whom among the Clergy would the wormwood and gall of Atterbury's pen be at-

* In the Convocation of 1640, John Lambe, Doctor of Laws, is named, together with a number of divines of the Lower House, as constituting a committee, chosen in the 10th session, for drawing up canons. The same person is again mentioned in the 25th session, as present in the Upper House, with another civil lawyer, Dr. Heath, during debates about the canons, *ad informandum Reverendissimum et episcopos*.—See the register of the Upper House, in the *Compleat Hist.*, &c.

tempted, and, if attempted, by what clergyman would it be endured in our times?—(See particularly the whole of his *preface*.)

The elaborate folio of Wake discusses with profound learning and in a much milder spirit, the sometimes confused and difficult subject of Convocations. By confronting the respective researches of these two celebrated writers, the truth may probably be sufficiently ascertained. I subjoin a few pertinent quotations from the large volume of Wake.

It was the PARLIAMENTARY Convention of the Clergy, (begun by Edward I.) for subsidies, that formed, says Wake, “one of the chiefest estates of the realm in Parliament.”—PROVINCIAL Summons of the Clergy to Parliament, for passing subsidies originally, “either by confirming what had before been conditionally granted in Parliament, or by granting that here, which they had hitherto refused to do there, are what we properly call CONVOCATIONS.”—“These PROVINCIAL CONVOCATIONS were first summoned by Edward II., originally by *desire* of the King, afterwards by his *writ* to the Archbishop.” The Archbishop for some time sent out “*conciliary* letters, together with his *Convocation-mandates*, and caused the clergy to meet in a *double* capacity.” At length he “thought it enough when they [the clergy] were assembled in Convocation, either

by his authority to require, or by his consent to permit them to act in a conciliary manner also," and "made them a *Council* as well as a Convocation."—"Thus the case stood when the Act of Submission in the 25th Henry VIII. was passed."—(See Wake, chap. i. pp. 3, 4, and the whole of chap. vii.)—The Convocation, says he, is an "ecclesiastical assembly for civil or state purposes." Might we not rather say, "an ecclesiastical assembly, called originally for passing subsidies, but employed also afterwards for important spiritual purposes?"—(Chap. i. p. 20.)

"I make no doubt, but that it is the duty, as well as wisdom of a Christian King, to consult of all these matters, (which concern the state of the Church,) with those who have the government of it committed to them by God ; . . . and neither obstinately to refuse the Clergy liberty to assemble, when they think it would be for the service of the Church, and the benefit of religion, to come together, nor yet unreasonably require their attendance when there is nothing at all, or nothing of any consequence, to be done by them."

. . . . "Should it so fall out that the Prince should neglect his duty in this particular, in that case, I conceive, it would be the duty of those, who are the fathers and governors of it, to apply to him for his permission to come together, to remonstrate with humility, but yet with Christian free-

dom too, the necessities of the Church, the evils that are to be remedied, and the reason they have to hope, that by their assembling, they may provide some remedy for them, and to press him in the name of God, and in pursuance of that trust which the public has reposed in him, to give a favourable answer to their requests. Should we be denied all liberty of these assemblies, though the governors and fathers of the Church should with all their care and interest endeavour to obtain it; should the Prince so far abuse his prerogative, as to turn it not only to the detriment, but to the ruin of all true religion and morality among us, and thereby make it absolutely necessary for something extraordinary to be done to preserve both;—in such a case of extremity, the Bishops and Pastors of the Church must resolve to hazard all in the discharge of their duty; they must meet, consult, and resolve on such measures, as by God's assistance they think their unhappy circumstances to require, and be content to suffer any loss or to run any danger for their so doing."—Chap. iii. p. 85.

"When, without the King's licence to make Constitutions, they" [the Convocation,] after 25 Henry VIII., "had no power to enforce the payment of their own subsidies, and our Kings being in distrust of their Clergy, did not think fit

to grant such licences to them, a new way was set on foot to have them ratified by act of Parliament; which from thenceforth obtaining, obliged the King to assemble the Convocation *together with the Parliament*, and so brought up that custom which has ever since prevailed; viz. of generally calling the Convocation about the same time with the Parliament.—Chap. ix. page 463.

“I would willingly become a humble petitioner to them, [the fathers of the Church,] that their sacred meeting, [the Convocation,] should from henceforth be opened with the same solemnity that they have heretofore been wont to be; that at the beginning of every such synod, they [the Clergy] should be directed by the Archbishop, if they have any motions to make, or any petitions to offer, freely to make and present them. But then in order hereunto, I conceive, the claim of *right* in this case must, in the first place, be dismissed.”—Ch. ix. p. 526.

“The Convocations of the province of Canterbury have been wont to be more frequently employed, and to do more business than those of York; but they have done it by the direction and order of our metropolitans.”—“In 1689, in the province of York, the Convocation began on the 19th of October, but it was only prorogued from session to session, and

neither did nor debated upon any thing. . . . 'The Convocation of Canterbury met with the Parliament, October 19th, 1689, and sat till November 6th, seventeen days after Parliament.'—Ch. ix. pp. 519, 552.

The following is an extract from the 25th Henry VIII., commonly called the Act of Submission, as given at length by Wake :—

“ That they” (the said clergy) “ ne any of them from henceforth shall presume to attempt allege claim or put in ure any constitutions or ordinances provincial or synodal or any other canons nor shall make promulge or execute any such canons constitutions or ordinances provincial by whatsoever name or names they may be called in their Convocations in time coming which alway shall be assembled by authority of the king's writ unless the same clergy may have the king's most royal assent and licence to make promulge and execute such canons constitutions and ordinances provincial or synodal upon pain of every one of the said clergy doing contrary to this act and being thereof convict to suffer imprisonment and to make fine at the king's will.”—Ch. x. p. 548.

“ It was resolved by the two chief Justices, and divers other Justices, at a committee before the Lords in Parliament, on divers points concern-

ing the authority of a Convocation, [8 James I. A. D. 1611] ;—

“ 1. That a Convocation cannot assemble at their Convocation without the assent of the King.

“ 2. That after their assembly they cannot confer to constitute any Canons without *licence de l'roy*.

“ 3. When they upon conference conclude any Canon, yet they cannot execute any of their Canons without the royal assent.

“ 4. They cannot execute any after the royal assent, but with these four limitations—

“ (1.) That they be not against the prerogative of the King ;

“ (2.) Nor against the common law ;

“ (3.) Nor against any statute law ;

“ (4.) Nor against any custom of the realm.

“ And all this appears by the statute, 25 Hen. VIII. ; and this was but an affirmance of what was, before the said statute.”—From Lord Chief Justice Coke, quoted by Wake, in ch. x. p. 566.

“ I do humbly insist upon it, that no restraint has been laid upon the clergy in Convocation, but *only* in the point of attempting and enacting, or to express all in one word, of making canons, constitutions, orders, and ordinances

provincial. In all other matters, I account them still at liberty, not only to treat, but to resolve too, as they did before."—Ch. x. p. 618.

The following quotations are from the Register of the Convocation of 1562, in the *Compleat History of Convocations* :—

"*Reverendissimus Dominus Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis brevem quandam orationem eloquentiæ plenam habuit ad Patres et Clerum ; per quam inter alia opportunitatem reformandorum rerum in Ecclesiâ Anglicanâ jam oblatam esse aperuit, et propensos animos tam illustrissimæ Domine nostræ Reginæ quam aliorum magnatum hujus regni ad hujusmodi Reformationem habendam declaravit ; hortando, præcipiendo, et mandando Prælatos et Clerum Inferioris Domûs in dictâ domo Capitulari, coram eo et reliquis Patribus constitutos, quatenus ad Convocatus sui locum sese conferentes, unum virum gravem, doctum, et peritum de gremio suo provideant et eligant in eorum Prolocutorem.*"—Sess. 2.

"*Dimisso Clero Inferioris Domûs, Reverendissimus rogavit Patres, quod unusquisque eorum citra proximam Sessionem excogitare velit ea quæ in eorum separalibus Diœcesibus*

reformatione indigeant, ac in proximâ Sessione proponere dignaretur."—Sess. 3.

Habitâ inter dictum Reverendissimum Patrem et cæteros Episcopos suos suffraganeos prænomatos communicatione sive disputatione de quibusdam articulis ad Christianam fidem faciendis, tandem dictus Reverendissimus accessiri jussit ad se Prolocutorem domûs Inferioris; qui quidem Prolocutor una cum sex aliis de Clero dictæ Domûs Inferioris coram Patribus sui copiam faciens, proposuit et asseruit; quod quidam de dictâ Domo exhibuerunt quasdam diversas Schedas de rebus reformandis per eos respectivè excogitat' et in Scriptis redact'.—Et ulterius proposuit, quod Articuli in Synodo Londinensi, tempore nuper Regis Edwardi Sexti (ut asseruit) editi, traditi sunt quibusdam aliis viris ex Cætu dictæ Domus Inferioris, ad hoc etiam electis, ut eos diligenter prospiciant, examinent, et considerent; ac prout eis visum fuerit, corrigant, et reforment, ac in proximâ Sessione etiam exhibeant."—Sess. 4.

The following are from the Register of 1661, &c., in the *Compleat History*; and first from Archbishop Juxon's Mandate to the Bishop of London, May 8, 1661.—Gulielmus, &c. *Archiepiscopus* Gilberto *London. Episcopo*

salutem.....Breve illustrissimi....Domini Caroli secundi.....nuper cum eâ quâ decuit reverentiâ, obedientiâ, et subjectione humiliter recepimus in hæc verba.—“ Quibusdam arduis et urgentibus negotiis Nos, securitatem et defensionem Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, ac pacem et tranquillitatem, bonum publicum, et defensionem Regni nostri et subditorum nostrorum ejusdem concern’. Vobis in fide et dilectione quibus nobis tenemini rogando mandamus, quatenus præmissis debito intuitu attentis et ponderatis, universos et singulos Episcopos, &c....totumque Clerum cujusque Diœceseos...ad comparandum coram vobis in Ecclesiâ Cathedrali Sancti Pauli London..... ad tractand’ consentiend’ et concludend’ super præmissis, et aliis quæ sibi clariùs exponuntur tunc ibidem ex parte nostrâ. Teste meipso apud Westm. undecimo die Aprilis, Anno Regni nostri tertio decimo.”

Sessio 120. Die Mercurii, 20 Aprilis 1664—
“introducâ petitione Clericorum indigentium in Insulâ Vectis reman’ et residen’ relatum fuit Reverendo Patri Domino Episcopo London’ ad deliberand’ desuper et ad certificand’.”

From the Register of the Lower House of Convocation of 1588. Sessio 12. Reverendissi-

mus Pater, instanter rogavit omnes præsentes ad contribuendum et præstandum aliquam pecuniarum summam, in sustentationem et sublevamen quorundam Tyrrel, et Tydder, Presbyterorum, aliquando seductorum instigationibus et persuasionibus falsis scelerati Romani Pontificis ejusque adhærentium, ac nuper errores suos publice confitentium. Et facta fuit collectio in usum præfatorum Tyrrell et Tydder ad Summam £3 14s. 10d.

From the Register of 1661, (Upper House.)
 Sessio 63. Die Sabbati.....*Reverendus Pater*
*tractatum inter eos habuit de et super Revisione Canonum et Constitutionum aliàs in Anno Domini 1640, edit' et provis' et post aliquot tractat' desuper, Dominus Episcopus London. de consensu Confratrum suorum curam diligentis revisionis et examinationis eorundem Reverendis Viris Domino Roberto Oxon., Humfrido Sarum, &c.....respectively Episcopis. [commisit.]*
 That is, they conferred about them, not in order to conclude any thing, but to prepare what might be submitted, we may suppose, to the King for his approval.

The Convocation even of the province of Canterbury appears, it must be confessed, as

Wake contends, to have generally done but little business, except granting subsidies. But the Registers are, for the most part, very scanty, even when much was evidently done. And if former Convocations were remiss in consulting for the Church's efficiency and defence, is their inertness to be the rule without exception to their posterity? Are they *vitiis imitabiles*?

It has been said, "supposing the Convocation in good earnest to transact business, what could we expect, from the existing diversity of opinions, but endless confusion, unless the preparation of matter for consideration were scrupulously consigned to a few well-approved individuals?" But the fact is, this has ever been, as we have shown, the very method adopted by our Convocations, in their appointment of Committees, and generally of joint Committees of both Houses.

The writer has been glad to find that his sketch of the history and nature of Convocations coincides in the main with that which has been taken in several recent articles in the *British Magazine*. These articles have not adverted, as far as he is aware, to the active employment in former times of a Convocation in the Irish branch of the Church of England; and an idea seems to have gone abroad, that it never did exist there. But this is erroneous. For, in a pam-

phlet (on *some proceedings in the Convocation*, A.D. 1705, to be seen among nearly a hundred tracts, &c., on the Convocation-controversy in the British Museum,) the dedication is addressed to "the most Rev., Right Rev., and Rev. Members of the Convocation in Ireland;" and mentions "the restoration of their legal Synod, sitting equal by the Parliamentary and Provincial Writs," as having soon "followed the revival" of those in England. See also, in one of the volumes of tracts, "a Representation of the present State of Religion, with regard to Infidelity, Heresy, Impiety, and Popery, drawn up and agreed to, by both Houses of Convocation in Ireland," A.D. 1712.

CHAPTER III.

The Church's own consultations, a principal means of correcting real evils, supplying defects, and promoting improvements in her spiritual character ;—and first, of counter-acting, as far as spiritual measures can counteract, the abuses of patronage.

LET us touch, with humility and awe, like the Levites handling, in order to steady, the agitated ark of God—let us touch upon some of the questions regarding *corrections, supplements, and improvements*. On all these points, if the CONVOCATION, with proper powers and qualifications, were but once duly and wisely employed according to the divine will, it would be seen, surely even by individual schemers, and much more by statesmen intent upon momentous changes, to be in some cases the only, in others a main and suitable public medium, for setting contention at rest, for precluding empi-

rical speculations, for accomplishing practical good.

Patronage, considered simply as a solemn trust, necessarily and beneficially connected with endowments, is good; but abused patronage, and (we dare not omit to add it) abused crown patronage in particular, seems, notwithstanding many noble instances to the contrary, to be the sorest and most extensive of all evils. Do not men's corrupt hearts, worldly-minded affections, and forgetfulness of GOD, come into fearful operation here? How then shall patrons be induced, without encroachment on their just rights, in this matter of solemn trust-property, to act for GOD, and not for themselves? The grace of GOD is alone sufficient, we know, to awaken conscience and to purify the motives of the heart. But are there no remedial public measures to be devised by *men* for at least restricting the evil? And could this one renovation be but fairly set on foot, would not the effect be like the withdrawal of chilling waters from fertile enclosures, or like exchanging the anomalous gloominess of nature, caused by the sun's eclipse, for full light in the heavens?

Many late writers on these topics, though decided advocates for our religious Establishments, have nevertheless all admitted and

lamented the malady, as still existing; some of them have analysed it with no unsparing hand. One writer traces the *rise* of its worst forms to the first two reigns of the house of Brunswick, and to the scandalous policy of some statesmen of those times, who employed even infidel authors to write down all religion, as a feint to draw off the attention of the Clergy from the mal-administration of public affairs; and who in the same wretched spirit corrupted the sources of ecclesiastical patronage with family influence.*—But is this probing deep enough? Our great champion Hooker, at the close of his fifth book, laments even “these eye-sores and blemishes,” as early as Elizabeth’s reign. The repenting Rochester† partly attributes his infidel profligacy

* Professor Pusey on *Cathedral Institutions*, p. 94—100.

† See Burnet’s *Life of Rochester*.—“He told me plainly,” says the pious Bishop, recording the death-bed scene, “there was nothing that gave him and many others a more secret encouragement in their ill ways, than that those, who pretended to believe, lived so that they could not be thought to be in earnest when they said it.” . . . “The aspirings that he had observed at Court, of some of the Clergy, . . . made him often think that they suspected the things were not true, which in their sermons and discourses they so earnestly recommended. Of this he had gathered many instances. I knew some of their mistakes and calumnies; yet I could not deny but something of them might be true; and I publish this the more freely to put all that pretend to religion, chiefly those that are dedicated to holy functions, in mind of the obligation that lies upon them to live suitably to their profession.”—Jebb’s edition, p. 220.

to his having witnessed the shameful prostitution of religious offices by great men in Church and State. And have not we Clergymen been guilty in not more openly shaking our garments, and in not more boldly standing out, and protesting, against this desecration? Our reprovers are apt to assume that there is no remedy. But is there indeed none? Will not civil and ecclesiastical rulers and other patrons, if *duly* appealed to, be led at all to reconsider and check what is amiss? Will not many be found, who when urged on this topic will respond aright? Some, who will start up of their own accord to a sense of duty, and show beyond expectation, by selecting only men of approved piety and character for spiritual cures, that they are "taught of God," and "constrained by the love of CHRIST," to make a conscience of their awful responsibilities? Will not many come forward,—I do not say, in obduracy or hypocrisy, to abjure all family attachments, or all upright political co-operations, nor even perhaps to condemn all rightly moderated secular interests, but—to despise them *all* in comparison of promoting the honour of the Church of CHRIST, and, as far as possible, securing a purer channel for the distribution of church offices, particularly the higher?

Again; is it feasible, that the commission appointed in 1694, after Queen Mary's death, and

renewed for a short period in the year 1700, consisting of the two Archbishops and three other Prelates, who acted as a council of patronage to the King, and “ recommended to all bishoprics, deaneries, and other vacant preferments,”* might be imitated at the present day? And would not the upright and pious ministration of crown patronage, by whatever lawful means promoted, raise the standard of faithfulness in the exercise of patronage generally through the country? Would not the simple fact also of a revived CONVOCA-TION prove at the same time a stimulus both to the piety and learning of its present members, and the occasion of an increased demand in future for members of that stamp; and so constrain patrons, especially of the higher appointments, to act uprightly?

“ But,—extrinsic regulations! What can they avail?”—Not much, it may be conceded, in any direct mode of operation; but *indirectly* at least, extrinsic regulations may be shown to be capable of materially restraining, or counteracting perversions of church patronage. Our Church, for instance, seems to have wisely designed, that candidates for Holy Orders should pass through several sifting processes;—a point which well de-

* Burnet's own Life and Times, vol. ii. p. 716, folio 1734.

serves to be noticed by those, who cry out against her as allowing nothing *popular* in appointments to the ministry.* There are college education, college testimonials, the *si quis*,—(a paper read on successive Sundays in the congregation of the parish, where the candidate has been resident, calling upon them to testify against him, if his character be disreputable,)—and the examinations by the Bishop and the Bishop's chaplain. The obvious design of all this is, that notoriously refuse characters being separated off, patrons, when unfaithful to their sacred trust, may have little to select from, but solid grain. Now might not each of these sieves be easily rendered less transmissive of chaff? The present Bishops are understood to be in general strict in their examinations; but might not a still higher standard of religious knowledge and character

* This is the misapprehension of many Dissenters. The reason why each of our congregations does not *immediately* choose its own particular minister, is apparent from the Dissenters' own showing. For they admit and rebuke heinous evils, actually found to arise from the people's choosing their own pastors. While their congregations themselves are called *independent*, and as to the choice of their ministers, in some sense are so, their ministers are confessed in effect by themselves to be often, in the most grievous manner *DEPENDENT* upon an aristocracy, and sometimes upon a democracy of their people.—See some cogent matter-of-fact Letters on the *Voluntary System, in four parts*, by a Churchman, *passim*. [Rivington.]

be promoted and looked for in candidates? And has not Professor Pusey pointed out with great force, how feasibly preparatory theological studies for the benefit of candidates for holy orders, and how materially theological learning in general, might be improved by rearing afresh and restoring to primitive purposes, instead of altogether *sinecuring*, (so to speak,) and then of course equalizing, or, in plain language, transferring away, to other religious uses, all our cathedral institutions? Might not our divinity thus become once more massy and ponderous, to the heart's content, of its eloquent and candid eulogist in the Church of Scotland, Dr. Chalmers, and be at the same time every where at work; till, with the help of God, it should crush by its weight and expansion the infidelity and false doctrines of our time?

Now the legislature, I take it for granted, cannot without invading spiritual rights, deal with *more* than one half of these momentous questions. Its office is restricted to the guardianship of the Royal Prerogative, and of that peculiar trust-property which is vested in all lay patrons. The *other* half of the subject, which is purely ecclesiastical, seems indispensably to require an expression of the sense of the Church *as such*, which can be adequately obtained and declared by the

CONVOCATION alone. No other assembly of the clergy, no self-constituted ecclesiastical body, no ecclesiastical commission, however highly empowered, can in the nature of things authoritatively propound,—much less can any mere individuals, however distinguished, properly represent,—the sentiments of the whole Church. The CONVOCATIONS could do so, both authoritatively and advantageously. The petitions or addresses of Convocation to the Sovereign and the Houses of Parliament, respecting patronage, would surely have peculiar weight, especially when containing self-denying requests from the Clergy, that they may not receive appointments on merely temporal or family considerations. The acts also of Convocation, calculated to elevate the pre-requisite qualifications for admission to Holy Orders, would be always influential, and if duly confirmed, would have the force of law on all ministers of the Church, and all candidates for her sacred offices.

CHAPTER IV.

The Church's own Consultations a principal means of remedying her defects in Discipline.

As to defects, we may first mention that, which we ourselves, in one of our religious solemnities, with sorrow acknowledge. The Church, and virtually the nation, have lamented in the Communion Service from year to year, our want of adequate *discipline*; but have done nothing effectual to remedy the evil.

In the *Reformation of ecclesiastical laws*, a remedy was prepared by Cranmer, and his associates, towards the close of the reign of Edward VI., which, had the King lived to be of age, would have been doubtless adopted by act of parliament, and in the hope of which Diocesan and Provincial Synods had first been suspended in the time of Henry VIII. It is there provided, that each rural Dean should "watch

over the manners of the clergy, and the people of his precinct ;" that " Archdeacons should be general visitors over the rural Deans ;"—that every Bishop should have " yearly Synods of his clergy ;"—that the Archbishops " should call Provincial Synods upon any great occasion, having obtained warrant from the King for it." Excommunication was to be inflicted by none but ministers of religion, in presence of a lay-magistrate.*

Archbishop Usher's "*reduction, or restoration of episcopacy into the form of synodical government in the ancient Church*, [or rather, perhaps, mixing up of presbyterianism with episcopacy,] proposed in 1641, as an expedient for the prevention of those troubles which afterwards did arise about the matter of church-government," aims at reconciling the synodical conventions of the pastors " of every parish with the presidency of the Bishop of each diocese and province." It recommends a weekly meeting of the incumbent pastor, and church-wardens, and sidesmen of each parish ; who shall admonish and present, if necessary, at the next monthly synod, scandalous livers, in the meantime excluding them from the Lord's table. It next recommends the institu-

* Burnett's History of the Reformation, vol. ii. pt. i. p. 322, Oct. edn. 1820. See also Preface to the same vol. pp. xix—xxii.

tion of suffragans, according to the statutes in the 26th of Hen. VIII., and according to their revival in the 1st of Queen Elizabeth, only increasing their number from twenty-six to as many as there are rural deans in all the dioceses. Each of these suffragans is to hold a monthly synod of all the incumbent pastors within his precinct, who are to pass sentence of excommunication upon notorious and impenitent offenders, &c. The Bishop is to summon a Diocesan Synod once or twice a year, according to circumstances, consisting of the suffragans of the diocese, and the incumbent pastors, or a select number out of every deanery, who shall revise the orders of the monthly synod, &c. under the presidency of the Bishop. Lastly, it suggests, rather than recommends, that there might be triennial Provincial Synods, consisting of all the bishops, and suffragans, and such of the clergy as should be selected out of every diocese, the Primate of either province presiding. The Provincial Synods "might join together, and make up a National Council, wherein all appeals from inferior synods might be received, and all ecclesiastical constitutions established."*—"It would be well," says Bishop Burnett, in the conclusion of *His Own Life and Times*, "if, after the poor clergy are relieved

* See Baxter's *Life and Times* by Sylvester. Ed. 1696. pp. 206, 239, 245.

by the tenths and the first-fruits, a fund were formed of £20 or £30 per annum, for the rural Deans, and that they, with at least three of the clergy of the deanery, named by the Bishop, examined into the manners both of the clergy and laity; and after the methods of private admonition had been tried, according to our Saviour's rule, but without effect, that the matter should be laid before the Bishop, who, after his admonitions were also ineffectual, might proceed to censures, to a suspension from the sacrament, and to a full excommunication, as the case should require." (vol. ii. p. 635, fol. 1734.)

The *American Episcopal Church* appears to have partially taken Usher's plan for their model. "In each diocese an annual Convention is held, consisting of the clerical and lay delegates from the several parishes over which the Bishop presides. In these annual conventions local canons are made, and all ecclesiastical affairs are transacted. The annual conventions appoint clerical and lay delegates to represent them in the triennial general Convention of the whole Church in the United States."

Now these three sister-models of discipline appear, as to their ground-work, to be derived from Scripture authority, and from apostolical and primitive usage, which do sanction,

or perhaps require, frequent diocesan councils of each Bishop and his Presbyters.* Towards the most moderate of these plans, if no approximation be attempted, will the Church discharge her solemn duty to her LORD and SAVIOUR? Can it be said with truth that the attempt is altogether impracticable, or would only be a weak compliance with reforming delusions of the age? Will it not tend to dispel those delusions? Will it not obviate at once various schemes of tampering with the endowments, and polity of the Church? And how is it that the love of genuine amendment exhausts itself upon temporalities, and stops short of spiritual CHURCH-DISCIPLINE; without the renovation of which, not only the obliquities, but all the hazardous strokes of fiscal mechanism, will prove abortive? Could not the requisite advance towards a better DISCIPLINE, especially over openly bad ministers, be accomplished, if not in immediate connexion, yet *pari passu*, with the projected improvement in the ecclesiastical courts? Would not a concomitant review and revision of the Canons, ratified by the King in 1603, but never enacted in parliament, or of those in 1640, though never ratified, be expedient and practicable? Can none of the difficulties be surmounted, which have arisen

* See Appendix, No. 2.

from the long disuse of the Church's scripturally warranted vigilance over her members; from the unqualified reaction against papal usurpations; from our patriotic, but misguided, views of freedom; and still more probably, from the infidel spirit of the times?

These and similar inquiries about discipline do and will tend to disturb and scatter the Church, and to furnish stimulants to the violence of her adversaries. And how can such points be thoroughly settled, except by CONVOCATION? For they are of a *mixed* kind, referring to spiritual matters, as far as church-censures, and exclusion from church-communion are concerned, and to temporal views, as far as relates to the effects on men's reputation, and worldly interests. No *mere* civil power can, without injustice, not to say impiety, determine, as to the former, what shall be the discipline of the Church. That must be debated and agreed upon in the first instance by the Church herself, "in the name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST," (says the Apostle,) "when ye are gathered together, and my Spirit, with the power of our Lord JESUS CHRIST." (1 Cor. v. 3, 4.)*

* One can scarcely suppose that the proceedings of the Commissioners, appointed some time ago, to examine into the state of the Ecclesiastical Courts, are intended to be submitted to Parliament without the sanction or concurrence of Convocation. For when has the Civil Power, in such cases, even when

On the other hand, an opinion solemnly pronounced by Convocation, that any rapid attempt at the amendment of discipline upon a

it was arbitrary, except only under James II., dispensed with the Common Councils of the Church? Certainly the appointment, unconnected with Convocation, of the Ecclesiastical Commission, in 1689, by William III.,—(which was itself objected to at the time, so much so, that four of the Commissioners, Sprat, *Bishop of Rochester*, Jane, *Dean of Gloucester*, Aldrich, *Dean of Christ Church*, and Meggot, *Dean of Winchester*, withdrew from the Commission, partly on this very account,)—made special provision for reference in due time to the Convocation. The Commission, as quoted in Birch's *Life of Tillotson*, runs thus:—"Whereas . . . We therefore . . . authorize any nine of you, [of the thirty Commissioners,] three to be Bishops, to propose such alterations of the Liturgy and *Canons*, and such proposals for the reformation of *Ecclesiastical Courts*, and to consider such other matters, [the preamble had specified, 'a stricter method for the examination of candidates for Holy Orders,'] as in your judgment may most conduce to the ends above-mentioned;" that is, peace and reconciliation of differences,—p. 180, ed. 1752.—Immediately afterwards, it is added by the biographer—"What they agreed upon, being laid before Convocation, might first have their sanction, and then that of the Parliament itself."—But an authentic MS. of the Commissioners' consultations, in stating the tenor of their Commission, after the words—"to the ends above-mentioned;"—goes on thus—"so that the things, so by you considered and proposed, may be in readiness to be OFFERED to the Convocation at their next meeting, and WHEN APPROVED by them, may be presented to us, and our two Houses of Parliament; and that, if it shall be judged fit, it may be established in due form of law.—September 17th, 1689."

large scale is at present impracticable, (should such be the result of its deliberation,) and that opinion accompanied with the principal reasons on which it is grounded, would probably satisfy and compose the minds of many conscientious churchmen, who would never rest in any other decision; and it might even convince some gainsayers.

If on a full consideration of the subject, it should be thought right, that in future, Provincial and Diocesan Synods, upon some such plan as above alluded to, should be revived, and that Convocations should merge in Provincial Assemblies, properly so called; who so well suited as the Convocation itself to discuss and arrange, in due submission to the civil power, such a transfer of its duties and employments?

CHAPTER V.

The Church's own Consultations the best, the only means of settling the question respecting the revision of the Book of Common Prayer.

THE doubts in some cases, and contentions in others, which have arisen regarding the *revision of the book of Common Prayer*, require a duly authoritative adjustment, without which they cannot, it should seem, be adjusted at all. The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion will not, it is presumed, be now brought into debate, which were so unanimously agreed to by the fathers of the Reformation, and left untouched by all the most pious and learned of our divines at the Restoration. *Nolumus mutari* will be still, we hope, the watchword with regard to this standard of faith. As to the Liturgy, there may be among good men considerable difference of opinion.

For myself, I candidly confess, if without presumption I may say it, that I am opposed to any attempt at revising the Liturgy, under our present circumstances, for the following reasons : — 1. Dissenters, on *principle*, fairly tell us, that as far as they are concerned, no corrections would avail, as long as the Church of England is an Established Church. 2. The corrections could not be limited by any antecedent measure to a few, or to inconsiderable changes ; their extent would depend entirely upon the opinion of the Commission, to whom, probably, the preparation of them would be entrusted. 3. Our standard of theology and piety is surely far inferior to that of the martyrs of our Church, the chief compilers of the Liturgy ; the puny stature of most clergymen's liturgical criticism at this day could not, without presumption, be brought to cope with their strength ; our knowledge of Scripture,⁴ and of Christian antiquity, ought first to be elevated to somewhat of a level with theirs ; then we might proceed to review their labours. 4. It is better, when the risk of failure in sacred learning is so hazardous, to continue the use of formularies, in which, with all their imperfections, so many thousands of pious Christians, from generation to generation, have joined with edification, than to be meddling, and criticising, and perhaps

wrangling, about “ words to no profit,” and so losing all spiritual benefit and comfort. 5. The principle of innovation in civil affairs, so warmly contended for at the present day, cannot be applied to religion and the Church of CHRIST, without fatal error ; in many temporal matters, the inventive powers of this age have done wonders ; but in relation to the doctrines and institutions of Christ and his Apostles, as Jewel expresses it, what is new, that is erroneous ; what is ancient, that is genuine and good.* 6. Let our discipline be raised, and half the difficulties in our spiritual Services would disappear. If we lower our Services instead, we do but incur a double defection.

Some eminent divines, however, have doubtless been in favour of a revision.

“ The alterations in the book of Common Prayer,” (says Burnett,) “ agreed upon by the Commissioners in 1689, but rejected in the Lower House of Convocation, will, I hope, at some future time or another, be better entertained than they were then. I am persuaded they are such as would bring in much the greater part of

* *Id esse verum, quodcunque primum ; id esse adulterum, quodcunque posterius.*—Apolog. in Randolph's *Enchirid.*—p. 323.

the dissenters into the communion of the Church, and are in themselves desirable, though there were not a dissenter in the nation.”* The majority of the Lower House, however, thought differently, and possibly with good reason. It is greatly to be feared, from many of their corrections, that the prevailing views of the Gospel doctrines in those times were much too low to be generally admitted at the present day. Some of the principal of their proposed alterations appear to be the following :—The Lord’s Prayer does not appear to be omitted any where, except in one instance ; nor is the *Gloria Patri* omitted any where.—The Apocryphal lessons are laid aside.—The Apostle’s Creed remains untouched.—In the Baptismal service, the expression, *this child is regenerate*, is continued, and—to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, is changed to—with water and thy Holy Spirit.—In the Burial-service, instead of—to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother, it is—to take out of this world the soul of our brother. The expression—to deliver this our brother out of the miseries, &c. is omitted, and the latter part of the prayer in which it occurs is altered in consequence.—They agreed at last upon adding to the Rubric concerning the Atha-

* Conclusion of his *Life and Times*—p. 634 ; fol. 1734.

nasian Creed, a declaration, that “the Articles of it are to be received and believed, as being agreeable to the Holy Scriptures; and the condemning clauses are to be understood, as relating only to those, who obstinately deny the substance of the Christian faith.” As to the suretyship of parents, and the sign of the cross, at the baptism of children, and as to the use of the surplice, and kneeling at the Lord’s table, a departure from the general rule is allowed for conscience sake, and under particular circumstances.*

The Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States,† assembled in their general Convention, from September 27th to October 7th, in the year 1785, nearly a century after the Commission in this country, having been compelled by their

* I state these particulars from the MS. already alluded to, the sight of which I obtained through the kindness of a private hand, and which was duly copied from the notes, taken at the time, by one of the Commissioners.—The account of their revision in Birch’s *Life of Tillotson*—p. 180, ed. 1752, appears to be by no means accurate.—See Appendix, No. 3.

† The writer acknowledges the kindness of the Rev. Thomas Hartwell Horne, author of the *Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures*, in furnishing him with these and other particulars, pp. 22, 72, respecting the protestant episcopal Church of the United States. Mr. Horne for the last twelve years has been in close correspondence with some of the Bishops and Clergy of that Church.

peculiar circumstances, consequent upon the American Revolution, to alter those parts of our Liturgy, which relate to civil governors, proceeded "with gratitude to God, (they say,) to embrace the happy occasion which was offered them of establishing such other alterations and amendments as might be deemed expedient." They farther declare that most of the amendments or alterations, which had the sanction of the great divines of 1689, were adopted by them (the American church,) with such others as were thought reasonable and expedient." They seem, however, to have deviated widely in many instances, and it does not appear from the language of the Preface to their edition of the Common Prayer, that they had any authenticated copy of the Revision of 1689 in their hands.* — The morning and evening services are shortened chiefly by avoiding repetitions of the Lord's Prayer and *Gloria Patri*, and by using selections from the Psalms and parts of chapters frequently, instead of whole chap-

* For these particulars, see the Prefaces of the Common Prayer-book of the American Episcopal Church, editions 1785 and 1809, which, if I may judge from a slight comparison, do not materially vary from one another; and from the latter year to the present time, only some unimportant alterations are said to have been introduced. In the edition, however, of 1809, the Nicene Creed is restored, which had been removed from that of 1785.

ters of the Scriptures, for lessons.—The apocryphal lessons are omitted, and portions of canonical scripture substituted for them.—In the Apostles' Creed, the article of *Christ's descent into Hell* is omitted.—In the baptismal Service the whole introduction to the Lord's Prayer, containing, "*Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate,*" &c. is omitted; and in the prayer immediately subsequent to the Lord's Prayer, instead of—"*It hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, and to receive him for thine own child by adoption,*"—the words are—"*It hath pleased thee to receive this infant as thine own child by baptism.*"—In the Burial of the dead, instead of—"it hath pleased Almighty God, of his great mercy, to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother," they read—"in his wise providence to take out of this world the soul of our deceased brother." In the concluding prayer—"As our hope is this our brother doth,"—is omitted.—"The articles of religion are reduced in number, yet it is humbly conceived that the doctrines of the Church of England are preserved entire, as being judged perfectly agreeable to the gospel."—The substitution of parents for sponsors, and the disuse of the cross, at infant baptisms, are permitted, if desired.

Such as these are the principal alterations.

It must be admitted that they adhere in the main to their professed intention of “not departing from the Church of England in any *essential* point of doctrine, discipline, or worship.” But what shall we say to their particular corrections? In some they may have acted wisely; have they not in others taken bold steps, and slashed instead of mending? They omit the Athanasian Creed. But is not this omission a hazardous and unwarrantable deviation from the Church of England at the Reformation, and from all the original Protestant Churches; who unanimously concurred in adopting the Athanasian confession, (so called,) as alone expressly guarding the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation against the abstruse subterfuges, and hair-splitting equivocations of heresy, whether Arian, Socinian, or Ultra-millennarian? False doctrines, counterfeiting the true, are peculiarly dangerous, and should be specially contradicted and renounced by the Church. If, by means of some subtle artifice, the counterfeit should still be dexterously made to mimic the true coin, ought not the latter to be guarded by deeper and more numerous marks of genuineness, although with some unavoidable ruggedness in the indentations? And do not the various kinds of mystical heresy, at this moment circulated in this country,—such as those

of the *non-eternal sonship*, and of the *sinful humanity*, of our Lord, and such as *pre-existerianism* in regard to his human body or soul, with their respective clippings and offscourings of false doctrine,—clearly prove that this is not the time for abating one particle of the only antagonist-testimony which meets and detects such errors in all their obliquities and distortions,—that this is not the time for relinquishing a single stated season of reciting it in, and with, our congregations? Only let us be the more careful to point out at those seasons in our sermons, its true scriptural common-sense meaning.

The result, however, upon the whole, of the revision of the Liturgy in the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, is asserted, on the authority of superior clergymen of that Church, to have been “its annual increase.” For “the only two points (it is said) to be settled among the people there are, first, the evidence for the episcopal ministry in three orders; and, secondly, for the use of a pre-composed Liturgy. As soon as a person is sincerely convinced on these two points, he joins the protestant episcopal Church, as a matter of sacred obligation;”—that is, I suppose, if he escape the toils which Popery is now extensively spreading in the United States.* For there

* The *American Almanack* for 1832, reckons the number

the inquirer, heart-sick of the distraction and scepticism growing out of their fatal experiment of having no established religion at all, often gladly takes refuge in any Church, however corrupt, which maintains some settled rules of doctrine and government. But in this country,—where the great body of modern Dissenters, avowedly hostile to our established profession of sound Christianity simply because it is established, have been protected hitherto, by means of that very Establishment, from tasting all the bitter fruits of separation,—it is to be feared that similar effects to those in America would not follow a similar revision of our Liturgy. Probably not a single individual would *now* return in consequence of it to the bosom of the National Church, nor would future secessions be effectually obviated.

Still, under present circumstances, the questions have been, and will be, bandied about in various quarters, “What is the present Christian duty of the Church of England? Ought certain passages in her Liturgy to be altered or modified, with which many weak and some tender of Roman Catholics in the United States at 500,000; for 1833, at 800,000. The Protestant Episcopal Church is estimated at 600,000, in both 1832 and 1833! See also the pregnant *Charge at the Visitation in Hampshire*, in 1834, by William Dealtry, D.D. F.R.S., Chancellor of the Diocese, p. 25.

consciences, however unreasonably, have been aggrieved;—witness the successive complainants, from the members of the Lower House of Convocation in 1562, (who lost their motion for alterations only by a majority of one,*) down to Non-conformists at this day? Or would not such readjustments of her already sound formularies be made at the risk of shaking fundamental principles, or impairing essential truths?" Again; "ought not we that are strong, to bear," in the present instance, the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves; but every one to please his neighbour for his good to edification, even as Christ pleased not himself?" (Rom. xv. 1—4.) Or is not this a case in which to please ourselves would be to violate conscience;—a case in which, in order "that the truth of the Gospel may continue with us, we must not give place, no not for an hour?" (Gal. ii. 5.)

Now where can these questions be set at rest? Where could the revision, if it were *really* requisite, be prepared for the royal and legislative approbation or allowance? And where, if inadmissible, can the reasons for its rejection be at all definitively and authoritatively set forth, except in an efficient Convocation? Without *this* settlement, will not every speculator be still meddling,

* See the particulars in Burnett's Hist. Ref. vol. iii. pt. 1, p. 443. 8vo. Edn. 1830.

and, to the continual injury of truth and peace,
be still trying his own feeble hand at corrections,
which mighty masters in piety and learning in
former times trembled to attempt?

CHAPTER VI.

The Church's own consultations the best means of publishing her testimony in regard to various false doctrines.

A FARTHER step towards preserving the doctrinal purity and promoting the practical efficiency of THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, might be to circulate among her members, and to publish her *testimony* in pastoral addresses, or synodal epistles, drawn up by the Bishops and Clergy in Convocation, and adapted to guard, inform, encourage, and exhort their flocks and the people at large, in respect of false doctrines, or other spiritual dangers and temptations characteristic of the times. I am not aware that the use of *precisely* this method can be traced in any convocational precedents; but representations of the existing state of irreligion in the country have been sometimes agreed to and

promulged by former Convocations,* and annual addresses are issued with effect by other ecclesiastical assemblies; for instance, by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and by various bodies of Non-conformists. Such a measure will scarcely be deemed an innovation on the spirit of our own Church, or a departure from scriptural and primitive models; and would be perhaps less invidious than stigmatizing particular books, as the Convocations did in the commencement of the last century.

For some years past an extraordinary and simultaneous excitement has been given by the press, and by other means, to various systems of apostacy from the genuine doctrines of salvation by Christ, and by Christ alone, to an extent probably unknown before in this country. These, now stirring, and in some quarters spreading, apostacies are chiefly—POPERY, which as to its essence is adding to GOD's written Word; SOCINIANISM, or denial of our Saviour's deity, which takes away from GOD's written Word;

* See two tracts, the one entitled, *A Representation of the Present State of Religion, as it passed the Lower House of Convocation*, 8vo. Lond. 1711; and the other, *A Representation of the Present State of Religion, with regard to Infidelity, Heresy, Impiety, and Popery, drawn up and agreed to by both Houses of Convocation in Ireland*, 1712.

INFIDELITY, which rejects or despises the Holy Scripture altogether; and, from Infidelity often dimly distinguishable, open ATHEISM itself, which is the renunciation of all religion, natural and revealed.

Popery is facilitated—indirectly indeed, but really and in the issue, facilitated—by two forms of error, professedly hostile to it, and actually hostile to each other;—1. by CHURCH-OF-ENGLAND SEMI-POPERY—(shall I call it?)—which ascribes to her apostolic ministry and outward services a holiness equivalent to, and independent of, inward sanctification; and 2. by FANATICISM, which discards all the ordinances of the Church of England, and all external Church authority. The former error seems to be unintentionally subsidiary to the Church of Rome, by familiarizing the mind to exorbitant unscriptural ideas of the *mere* visible Church, and to such unqualified language concerning traditions and concerning the elements in the Lord's Supper,* as seems near akin to Popery; the latter by fostering imagination and feeling, instead of faith, prepares the way for an easy transition to the

* It is painful to find this patching up again of errors, (subverted long ago, as far as Protestantism is concerned,) in a late learned work on the Parables; and in some of the statements concerning the Lord's Supper, in those often valuable publications, usually called the Oxford Tracts.

enthusiastic departments of the Papacy. Again, with Socinianism, and much more widely than Socinianism, there is diffused among us, RATIONALISM, or reasoning away all mysteries, which constitutes the essence of the Socinian heresy. The chilling influence of one or other of these delusions appears to have damped, if not to have distorted, the Confession of faith proposed to the Independents by the Congregational Union of June 1833; as may be seen in its studiously avoiding the *word* Trinity, and the *word* Persons, when attempting to define the scripture doctrine of the nature of GOD and of CHRIST, and in other instances.* Moreover, with Infidelity and Atheism are secretly co-operating NEOLOGY, which refines away in their favour the miraculous testimonies of the Bible; and INDIFFERENTISM to all or any forms of religion or irreligion, which is perhaps to Infidelity what dumb pain in the human frame is to pain in actual excitement.

Now is it too much to expect, that a synodal epistle, or representation, from the CONVOCATION, of the description abovementioned, in reference to these and similar topics of exhortation and warning, would carry along with it peculiar weight? I do not mean to say that it would, by mere dint of authority; but, (under the blessing

* See Appendix, No. 4.

of God,) by the voice of the assembled Church, by the free unconstrained expression of her sentiments, by devout and scriptural arguments in support of the Scripture-doctrines of eternal salvation by CHRIST and by CHRIST alone.

Much of the FANATICISM of the present day may be ultimately traced, I conceive, to the influence of a fascinating system of erroneous doctrines, (fascinating to minds so *earthly* as ours,) which, though checked, continues to attract by its primary, and at first apparently harmless, speculations, many even among ministers themselves. Here one mild, but firm and scriptural exhortation from the solemn Convention of the Church of CHRIST, might prove a safeguard to numbers, whom nothing else would so loudly warn of their danger. This will perhaps be better seen by a brief reference to particulars.

The ground-work of the whole scheme lies in the notion, that our Lord JESUS CHRIST at his second Advent, visible to this lower world, will raise his saints *alone*, or almost alone—will glorify all his risen and living saints, who, without appearing before any judgment seat, will reign with Him personally upon earth, for an immense number, (some say a thousand, others an indefinite number) of years;—and *after that*, but not before, will raise, and judge, and condemn the wicked to

the lake of fire. But whether the lake of fire means hell, in the sense so fearful to all ungodly men ;—indeed, whether there be any such places at all as an *eternal* heaven, and an *eternal* hell ;—are questions about which various advocates of this theory seem to be by no means agreed among themselves.*

Tenets, such as these, are regarded by the generality of pious and intelligent Christians, as in some points of view, detrimental, in others contrary, to the standard doctrines of Holy Writ. Their objections to them may perhaps be thus summarily expressed.

1. Let the simple summary statement of the tenets be read over ; then say whether on the face of it, some violence is not done to the fair and proper sense of the passages of Holy Scripture, which relate to the Second Advent.

2. Closer investigation shows, that these views depend generally on fallacious modes of interpreting Scripture ;—such as surmounting apparent discrepancies between the Old and New Testaments, by a reference to the former *rather* than to the latter, and such as wresting passages in the latter to a literal sense, (foreign from the con-

* The term *Millenarianism* is here purposely avoided. Opinions, and not persons,—the distinct set of opinions, and not vague notions, inadequately represented by an ambiguous term,—are intended to be pointed out.

text, and unsupported by other parts of Scripture,) *rather* than spiritualizing similar passages in the former, even when there is express warrant in the inspired writers themselves for the figurative signification. Thus the real discrepancy (according to the proper meaning of the original words) between the Saviour's coming to *judge*, that is, to rule, the earth, according to the Old Testament, and to *judge*, that is, to try and sentence, the quick and the dead, according to the New, is passed over; it is assumed that the texts in question in the Old, belong to the Second Advent; these are made prominent; and the texts of the New are kept out of sight, which speak more unequivocally of the Second Advent, and more distinctly and more frequently of its exclusively *judicial* process.

3. Again; the views in question often proceed upon the erroneous principle, that because two texts in Scripture are verbally *parallel*, the events to which they refer must be *identical* or *synchronical*. Thus Mede argues, I apprehend, from the verbal parallelism between "the thrones," and persons "sitting on them, and judgment given to them," in Rev. xx. 4, and "the setting of the thrones," and "the judgment," in Daniel vii. 9, 10; that the judgment in Rev. xx. 4, is the *same* as, or synchronizes *with*, the judgment on the fourth beast, in Daniel, chap. vii.

4. These tenets are often opposed to particular passages of Holy Scripture.—(1.) They assume, for example, that the binding, and (according to the proper construction of the words) the, possibly very long afterwards *subsequent*, imprisonment of Satan in Rev. xx. 3, synchronizes with our Lord's Second Advent. But this is quite contrary to the scripture assertion, that it is his putting Satan, with all his other enemies, "*under his feet*," or his "*bruising the serpent's head*," not his imprisoning Satan, which takes place at the Second Advent. (Gen. iii. 15; Heb. i. 13, ii. 8, 9.)—(2.) They argue from Rev. xx. 4, as if the *bodies* of the martyred saints were there said *to live again*, and reign with Christ a thousand years upon *earth*; whereas in that passage no mention is made of the *earth* at all, nor of their bodies or souls living *again*, but merely of their *souls living*.—(3.) These tenets contradict Heb. vii. 25, viii. 14, which describe JESUS as our High Priest, "set on the right of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," *then* and *there* "making intercession for us;" and which farther declare, that, "if he were *on earth* he should *not* be an high priest" at all in that sense, namely, as intercessor.* On the contrary, the opinions we are considering, represent

* See Owen on the Hebrews, *ad locum*.

holy men in the flesh as saved during Christ's personal earthly reign from the first to the (supposed) second resurrection ; and as there is no salvation at any time without Christ's intercession, they make our Lord at that time an Intercessor *upon earth*. (4.) It is also believed that these tenets can be shown to overthrow, or impair, the scripture testimonies, not only with respect to the resurrection both of quick and dead, and the reality of heaven and hell, but likewise with respect to almost all the main evangelical doctrines. Sometimes they strike at the reality of our Lord's ascension, as a literal, local ascension *into* heaven, and by consequence at the reality of his Second Advent *from* heaven. In all cases they tend, I conceive, to supplant the *glory* of his crucifixion ; obscure his mediatorial kingship and intercession in heaven above, and the office of his Spirit, in "convincing the world of sin upon the earth" below ; lessen the manifestations of Deity in his personal operations at his Second Coming ; keep out of view the ministry of good angels ; exaggerate the dominion of evil ones ; and, lastly, expose to doubt the eternity of the final happiness, and final punishment respectively, of the righteous and the wicked, angels and men.

5. These views were not admitted into any of the creeds or public confessions of the Primitive

Church. Throughout the writings of the apostolical fathers, it is not pretended that they can be traced except in two or three brief and obscure passages of one epistle, that of Barnabas, whose genuineness is controverted by the highest authority, that of Jones on the Canon. (vol. ii. p. 412.) In the second century, and in the first part of the third,—though more or less glanced at, or inculcated, in the works of many, perhaps in the works now extant, of almost all the fathers belonging to that period, when apocryphal errors were for a time awfully prevalent,—these views are not pretended, that I can find, to have been professed, or publicly authorized, as articles of faith, by the whole, or by any particular church. In the course of the third century they were successfully opposed. In the Nicene Council, in the very beginning of the fourth, they were *not* received as any part of the creed then acknowledged by at least two hundred and fifty Bishops and Presbyters from all parts of Christendom. On the other hand, the article in their creed,—“Of his kingdom there shall be no end,” — directly condemns the error of some, who say, that after Christ’s reign upon *earth*, the Scripture asserts nothing certain. In the close of the fourth century,* long afterwards

* A series of quotations from the Fathers, supporting the views here taken, may be seen vols. ii., iii., iv., and v., of Lardner’s works, octavo edition, London. 1788.

in the course of the Crusades, and lastly amidst the abuses of the Reformation abroad, and the extravagances of Puritanism in this country, multitudes of individuals did embrace these opinions; but there is no evidence adduced, that I know of, that they have ever found admittance into any authorized Confession of any respectable Christian community.* Indeed from the tenth century to the Reformation, the whole western Church, together with the Churches of Russia and Constantinople, and since the Reformation both the Roman Catholic and the above-mentioned Oriental, and all the leading Protestant Churches, have agreed to receive the Athanasian Creed; which pointedly opposes the scheme in question, declaring, that “at our Lord’s coming, *all* men shall rise with their bodies, and give account of their works, and they that have done

* The *Anabaptists* of Munster, and the *Shakers* of Mount Lebanon, afford painful examples of a fanatical reception of these opinions into creeds. A full account of the latter is given by Stuart in his *Three Years in America*, vol. i. p. 282, second edition.—I am the farthest possible from meaning to offend by this note, or by any thing else which I have written, any of those kind and pious friends, whose minds I think to be impaired by some contagion of the opinions alluded to. And I desire to bear with meekness the cross of being myself considered to be in error by them.

good shall go into everlasting life, and they that have done evil to everlasting fire.”*

Besides the above specified erroneous opinions, *immediately* growing out of the notion of our Saviour’s future earthly reign; there are heresies of far greater enormity, which have lately, in fact, connected themselves, and may therefore be supposed to have some hidden tendency to connect themselves, with those opinions;—such as the pretended unholiness of our Lord’s human nature; inherent righteousness and absolute perfection of fully approved saints; imaginary baptism of some by the Spirit with the same miraculous gifts of healing, and of tongues, as the apostles themselves; and not unfrequently actual sprinklings upon others of the vials of Manichæism, and Universalism, or the fiction of universal salvation.

Now though it seems to have been decided by authority, that there are no precedents sufficient to invest the Convocation with power, like the

* This creed was composed probably in the sixth century, and was received into the public services in France in the seventh, and throughout the western Church, as early as A. D. 930. See Waterland’s *Critical History* of the Athanasian Creed. Second edition, pp. 146, 166, 169.

General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to try *personally*, and visit with Church censures, even the most open and presumptuous offenders against the fundamental doctrines of the Church of which they profess themselves members, much less those who only deviate slightly and un-awares; and though it may be still requisite to leave such cases to the Diocesan Courts;—yet is not the Convocation at liberty to bear its testimony, and to warn the people, against unsound doctrines, unscriptural speculations, and dangerous delusions? And from what possible quarter could the solemn, but kind and salutary alarm be sounded, so as to reach at once all parts of the land, except from the united councils and prayers, addresses and representations, of a general, well-constituted, and duly administered Synod?

CHAPTER VII.

The Church's own consultations some of the best means of setting at rest the questions, arising under present circumstances, respecting the Oath of supremacy.

ANOTHER arduous topic of great moment, often brought of late years under public discussion, and connected with most serious points of inquiry concerning the test of admission to the main offices of Church and State, and particularly to Holy Orders, is the *Oath of Supremacy*.

At first view, this Oath might be expected to occasion trouble or difficulty to tender consciences. Reflecting upon the history and principles of the Church in these kingdoms, especially at and since the Reformation; and contemplating with serious attention the rapid changes carried on for some years past, absolutely in the State,

and relatively at least in the Church; must we not infer, that those changes will deeply affect that peculiar kind and degree of ecclesiastical authority, which the Protestant Church of England has conceded to the Civil Power, and which stands equally opposed to the "irresponsible" self-government in "their own affairs," claimed by Protestant Dissenters on the one hand,* and to the intriguing arbitrary, self-government practised by the Church of Rome on the other? Do not the usurped and usurping ecclesiastical pretensions of the latter who grasps at all churches as the "Mother of them all!" and whose Bishop sets up himself as "Christ's Vicar on earth," hold *now* some very different relation from what they have hitherto held, both to the Church of England and to the whole country? What then can be concluded even from this first impression, but that if, amidst all these momentous alterations, no corresponding alteration be made, either by explanation or revision, in the Oath of Supremacy, great hazard of moral obliquity is incurred, both by the imposers and recipients of the Oath? And ought we not to dread any rash, and even unmeaning, or ill-

* See the Independents' *Principles of Church Order and Discipline*. Prin. 4., in the "Minutes of the third General Congregational Union of England and Wales, held at the Congregational Library, May 7, 8, and 10, 1833."

understood swearing, by this, or any other oath, as possibly near akin to swearing falsely?

To enter a little into particulars. By Protestants it is sworn in their Oath of Supremacy, that—" *No foreign prince, prelate, person, state, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical, or spiritual, within this realm :—*So HELP ME GOD."*—*And, originally, no foreign prince, &c. had any such power or authority *within this realm*. None, confessedly, had any in the times of the primitive British and of most of the primitive Saxon Churches; or even under the Saxon princes who at length conformed, all of them, to the not yet wholly corrupted doctrines of the Church of Rome. And although, after the Reformation, the Bishop of Rome did, *in fact*, continue to exert over the Irish and English Roman Catholics that anti-scriptural extent of Church authority, which he began to usurp in this country not long after the Norman conquest; yet was it altogether unrecognized, except as *fully* prohibited by law, (however mildly at length the prohibition was executed,) namely, by the Acts respecting Uniformity, which were passed in the 1st, 23rd, and 29th Eliz.; which were confirmed or renewed by the 13th, 14th, 25th, and 30th Carol. II.; and which were left in force against Roman Catho-

lies till the 30th Geo. III., when, for *their* use, the alteration was first made of—"authority, *ecclesiastical or spiritual*"—into authority *civil or temporal*." From that time Protestants could no longer swear, as they had done all along from 1 Eliz. till then, that "no foreign prince, &c. hath any jurisdiction, power, &c. *ecclesiastical or spiritual*," legally recognized, or not fully prohibited by law, within this realm; for, in the wording of the new Oath for Roman Catholics, the law of the land had by implication recognised the Pope's spiritual power over them, without any renunciation, on *their* part, of its universal claims. Protestants might, however, still swear—"hath any *such* (legally sanctioned, or not legally discountenanced) jurisdiction, power," &c. But since the exemption of Roman Catholics from almost all political disabilities;—(I only mean simply to state the fact;)—indeed, since the allowance by the Legislature of the two public grants of money to the Church of Rome in Ireland, first, directly, for collegiate anti-christian studies, and afterwards, indirectly, towards scholastic anti-christian education, so as to involve the compromise of the grand protestant principle of the authority of the whole Bible, and of the whole Bible only;—since these events, Protestants seem to be again left to slide into some other sense, so as only to swear—"hath

any (by law *expressly* approved) jurisdiction, power," &c., *ecclesiastical or spiritual*, within this realm.

If this interpretation be not permitted me, to what shall I have recourse? Shall I understand the oath as requiring me to swear, what I can of course most safely affirm, that no foreign prince, prelate, &c., hath any jurisdiction, power, &c., over *me*;—that *I* for *myself*, and as unconcerned about others, renounce all the Pope's spiritual usurpations? Nay, but the crowning clause, (if I may so term it,) *WITHIN THIS REALM*,—in close connexion too with the solemn appeal,—so *HELP ME GOD*,—prevents my soul from finding rest in this sense.—Or, shall I say, that the words in the oath only deny the Pope's legally holding courts, trying causes, &c., within this realm? Alas! I am in a strait again; for the oath denies *any* authority or power to him, whether *de facto* or *de jure*. And the sense, in which the expressions—*hath or ought to have*—in the Oath, were originally designed to be taken, appears from what occurred in the Convocation of 1533, when the "question was proposed by the Archbishop to be discussed by the Prelates and Clergy, then assembled, concerning the authority and jurisdiction of the Pope, in *THIS REALM* of England;" and "the Convocation agreed in the negative, that the Bishop of Rome has NO MORE OR GREATER POWER IN *THIS*

REALM than ANY OTHER FOREIGN BISHOP."*—Or do I only assert, that the Pope neither has, nor ought to have, any ecclesiastical power over the Protestant Church of England, or other Protestant Communion? Then do I implicitly allow his *right* by the laws of God or of the land to exercise his spiritual and idolatrous tyranny over Romanists *throughout the whole world*. And yet, this last interpretation is recorded to have been proclaimed by perhaps the highest legal and official Irish authority before the assembled peerage of the empire, on one of the most solemn occasions that has ever occurred in the history of this nation; and no one seems to have combatted this view at the time by expounding at once the true meaning of the terms. Nay, one of the highest legal and official English authorities also, on the same great occasion, only exerted his powerful mind in exposing by an *argumentum ad hominem* the principles of an opponent, who, by his own showing, seemed to have equivocated as often as he had taken the oath. This our highest legal guide, left the oath itself unexplained. Nor do the speeches of the Prelates of the Church, on the same occasion, appear to have supplied any decided or well-harmonizing interpretations.*

* Wake's *State of the Church*, &c. p. 568.—See also Burnett, *Hist. of Ref.* vol. i. p. 126, fol.

* "This Oath [of Supremacy taken by Romanists] is pre-

Such is the ambiguity in which the expressions in the Oath of Supremacy are involved,

cisely the same as to the words, to which objection is taken, with the oaths of 1778 and 1791 The objection has been made before ; it was made in 1780 ; it was made in the petition of the Protestant Association, presented by Lord George Gordon, and signed by 120,000 persons. My Lords, these are the words of that petition to which I allude:—

That as Papists can now by legal authority confess the ecclesiastical or spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope and See of Rome, which our laws before the passing of the late Act have constantly disavowed, the petitioners are very much alarmed, lest they should be involved in the guilt of perjury, when called on to declare on oath, that “no foreign prince, person, prelate, state or potentate hath any jurisdiction or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, in this realm.”

. After a short interval the House of Commons took the Petition into consideration, and came to the following resolution:—

“That no ecclesiastical jurisdiction or authority is given by the said act of the 18th of his present Majesty to the Pope or the See of Rome.”

“And they came to the resolution rightly. When Henry VIII. transferred the ecclesiastical courts from the Pope to himself, he abolished for ever the jurisdiction of the Pope, and the derivative authority of his Bishops. And until it shall please your Lordships to restore the ecclesiastical courts of the Pope, and to allow him to assert his authority, and maintain his claim, it will still be true, that the Pope has no jurisdiction, power, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or civil, within this realm.”—(Bishop of Oxford, *Mirror of Parliament* for A. D.

and in which the Legislature, by whom it is imposed, have left them, not intentionally, I am

1829; *Debates on the Roman Catholic Relief Bill*, vol. ii. pp. 959, 960.

"I have taken the Oath of Supremacy, and I have abjured the spiritual supremacy of the Pope; but does it follow, that because I admit a person who has not done the same to sit by my side, I violate one tittle of the oath?"—(Bishop of Llandaff. *Ibid.* p. 1133.

"It is true that we swear, that 'no foreign prince, &c., hath, or ought to have, any power, authority, pre-eminence, or jurisdiction, spiritual, temporal, or ecclesiastical, within this realm.' And how (says the noble Lord) am I to fulfil the obligation of the oath, if I admit a body of persons in this country, who do acknowledge any foreign spiritual power? It is not for me to mediate between the oath and the noble Lord's conscience. The law so stands, and he has taken the oath notwithstanding. By the law, persons are allowed to acknowledge foreign power in spiritual matters; and with the knowledge of this law the noble and learned Lord has taken an oath, which he now finds it difficult to reconcile with that act. In 1791, an act was framed by another noble and learned Lord (Lord Redesdale) at the table, and that act contains an oath, on which the terms of the oath in the Bill before us are founded."—(Lord Lyndhurst, the Lord Chancellor. *Ibid.* p. 1134.)

"The expression, that 'no foreign prelate, &c., hath, &c., any temporal or civil power, or pre-eminence in these realms,' seems to be a mere truism of no significancy or importance, unless it be meant to convey, by implication, that the Pope may have, and exercise, the spiritual power acknowledged by Papists to be due to him. No foreign potentate, not the Pope himself, lays claim to temporal and civil power in other coun-

aware, but merely, perhaps, because it has never devoted—(and can this neglect be vindicated?)

tries; but it is the spiritual power, assumed by the See of Rome, and its effect in interfering with temporal and civil power, that ought to be disclaimed. That the allowing of Papists to take the oath will also implicate Protestants in taking something like a false oath, when they are called upon to declare, that the Pope neither hath, nor ought to have, any jurisdiction, spiritual or ecclesiastical, as well as temporal and civil, within these realms, I will not insist upon, after what has been said respecting similar oaths, which Papists have for some time past been permitted to take under particular circumstances. But I cannot help observing, that a strong sensation prevails in the public mind, and especially among the clergy upon this point; and I have myself received many communications concerning it.”—(The Bishop of Durham. *Ibid.* p. 1135.)

“What, I ask, are the words of the Oath? I do swear that I do ‘not believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, person, state, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, any power or authority, temporal, spiritual, or ecclesiastical, within this realm.’ Now, in my opinion, no person could conscientiously swear, that the Pope has no spiritual power in this realm, for every man must know that he has such power. We all know that there are Roman Catholics in this kingdom, and that, with respect to them, the authority of the Pope is, and must be, daily exercised. A Protestant may conscientiously take part of this oath; but, as it appears to me, only a part of it. A Protestant may say, ‘I swear that the Pope has no temporal or spiritual power, or authority, with respect to the affairs of the Protestant Church; but with reference to his own Church I cannot swear that, for I know he possesses spiritual authority.’ But in taking this oath the Protestant, as it appears to me, looks to this point; namely,

—never devoted its attention to the subject. The opinions publicly expressed by official authorities themselves, seem to be sometimes obscure ; at other times to be like a number of wavy lines, which even when they do set out from one point, diverge considerably. Neither has the Legislature as yet taken any steps to declare formally the sense it intends. Not so the Legislature at the Revolution ; for when they introduced those important changes by the Act of Settlement, they changed correspondently the oath, though it had never before been altered since the first of Elizabeth. In order to relieve the consciences of Protestant Dissenters, they omitted all the *positive* part of the oath, which asserted the King's ecclesiastical headship, and retained only the *negative* part, the renunciation of every other supremacy.*

While the present obscurity and doubtfulness remain in the language of the oath, is there not a snare laid for men's consciences, in their acts whether the Pope interferes with the authority of the Crown in England—whether he interferes with any temporary [temporary?] or ecclesiastical right, or any other right which the King possesses in these realms ? The Protestant may answer that in the negative, and therefore he may take the Oath. But surely it is better to simplify it, and to leave it in such a state that no part of it shall appear contrary to facts, which come within the knowledge of all".—(Lord Plunkett. *Ibid.* p. 1136.)

* See Appendix, No. 5.

of admission to the high and solemn offices of Church and State? And is there not reason to fear that many will prevaricate in taking this oath; and especially that inexperienced unwary young men, in the Ordination-service, will often, more or less, desecrate this awful appeal to God?

For, may not the following positions be considered as acknowledged principles in the doctrine of oaths?—1. Whosoever swears that which he does not distinctly know to be true, *resembles* him who swears what he knows to be false. 2. To take an oath at random is an *approximation* to perjury. 3. Solemnly to call the living God to witness an affirmation, couched in such questionable language as almost amounts to no affirmation at all, savours of profaneness.—If, then, it should be asked, “Why not let the Oath of Supremacy alone?” surely, we may ask again, “Is there not a cause?” For, besides the danger, the every day recurring danger to others, even to all the important functionaries from the highest to the lowest in Church and State;—besides this, candidates for holy orders, are, by the Legislature’s neglect, exposed to the risk of grazing the surface, though we hope and believe they do not wilfully plunge into the depths, of perjury.

True, some preliminary steps have been lately

taken towards the revision and amendment of the laws respecting oaths; and though ultimately the Oath of Supremacy must, in the course of such measures, come under consideration, yet in dealing with it the Legislature would experience, it should seem, some apparently insuperable difficulties. For how is the evil of the wording of the Oath to be remedied? How can it be accommodated to the actual state of our civil polity, as now constituted, without compromising the Royal Supremacy; and without omitting to protest against, nay, without virtually sanctioning the anti-christian usurpations of the Church of Rome over the Churches of her own communion, and likewise the Pope's known claims over *all* other Churches, as "the Vicar of Christ upon earth?" The question is doubtless partly political, and it appertains to the King's majesty, and the two Houses of Parliament, to settle it as far as it affects the prerogative, and other temporal interests. But who could so properly give an opinion concerning the *religious* part of the question, as the Church of England, assembled in her great Councils? Who could in this view so advisedly present petitions or addresses to the Monarch and the Legislature? What mere secular power could correct the Ordination Service, in which the Oath occurs?

To what tribunal can this be referred, but that of our spiritual Rulers and the convened representatives of the Clergy? Who but they are competent, as well by the national constitution as by scripture itself, to decide, *for the Church*, whether the Papal apostasy, and its spiritual invasions of the Saviour's authority, are really abated now-a-days; and whether a tacit consent to them in any form can be suffered to slip in among Protestants, without betraying the incommunicable sovereignty of Christ over his universal Church; and, lastly, in what duly-balanced expressions the Oath might be taken uprightly in the sight of God, and at the same time the protest against those anti-christian claims be maintained inviolate? In short, who can so properly contribute by suggestions or counsels, according to the recommendation of the high legal authority above quoted, "to simplify the terms of the oath," in a manner satisfactory on all sides to the consciences of men, as a well-conducted CONVOCATION?

CHAPTER VIII.

The Church's own Consultations, a principal mean of suggesting remedies for statistical defects, and for defects in theological education.

It deserves serious consideration, whether, in these times of unusual danger to religion and its ministers, it would not be fair to allow the Clergy opportunities of self-vindication in their own solemn Church-synod. There they might, of their own accord, suggest improvements in the *administration* of our admirable Church-polity; there they might in so doing, (and by divine grace we hope they would,) manifest collectively in their proceedings a disinterestedness and integrity, commensurate both to their own sacred obligations, and to the perils of the present crisis.

One of the present symptoms of distemperature in people's minds is the habit, so freely in-

dulged by the worst and often by apparently the best, of inveighing against *all* affluence, especially among the ministers of Christ, as essentially sinful. But what degree of property constitutes affluence? And at what point of this scheme of censure will you stop short of the extreme of counting all property essentially sinful? If you urge the example of our Saviour, how can you escape the obligation of voluntary poverty? But are there not instances in his Gospel of rich men who are called upon to be "ready to give, glad to distribute?"—The plain state of the case, as far as it concerns the Clergy, is this. Our pious ancestors placed the higher orders of the Ministry on a level, as to station, with the higher orders of the State. And are men of rank and property, who need holy restraints more than others, to be alone left without ministers, their equals in outward station, whose solemn duty it is to exemplify to them, in their own class of life, the self-mortified enjoyments, and munificent alms, and ample missionary gifts, and other abundant religious charities, known and unknown by man, which constitute the appropriate, the peculiar task and privilege of riches? The *highest* exercise of virtue, indeed, is to be seen in meekly enduring, like our blessed Saviour, the greatest privations and sufferings from the hand of God. But to be humble and self-denying in the

midst of his gifts of plenty, is as really a gospel grace as to be resigned to his will in tribulation and want. Would to God that all whom He prospers, whether ministers or laymen, were led to ponder Bishop Burnett's charge and testimony, as on his death-bed, "to his brethren and successors in the Episcopal office."—"I wish," says he, "the pomp of high living, and the keeping high tables, could be quite taken away; it is a great charge, and no very decent one; a great devourer of time; it lets in much promiscuous company, and much vain discourse upon you; even civility may carry you too far in a freedom and familiarity, that will make you look too like the rest of the world. I hope this is a burden to you; it was, indeed, one of the greatest burdens of my life."—"I had not strength to break through that which custom has imposed"—"I pray God to help *you* to find a decent way of laying this down."—(*His own Life and Times*, vol. ii. p. 642, fol. 1734.)—But if some amply provided ministers be self-indulgent, our bitter railing, and keenness, among any of us, to *equalise* for them by main force their property, if we could,—what is it but the hidden love of riches harboured by ourselves, the seminal *principle* of dissoluteness lurking in our own hearts?

The condition however of many small benefices is confessedly such as to occasion serious evils, which probably may, and ought, as far as possible, to be prevented; chiefly *poverty of income*, and its correlative evils, *pluralities*, (such at least as are *real* abuses,) and *non-residence*.

Now would not the CONVOCATION be able to supply many important suggestions, with a view to consolidating some very extensive and salutary plan, out of the elements of three kinds of remedies for *these threefold evils*, for which remedies respectively either sound reason or experience may be fairly pleaded;—1. Some such provision as Dean Prideaux's proposed Bill, under King William III.; 2. Bishop Kennett's scheme for buying in of impropriations; and 3. employing *real* sinecures, as they fall in, for the increase of poor livings. Scarcely either of these methods by itself would be available and effectual; but all combined would work well together.

Appended to Prideaux's work, *On the Original and Right of Tithes*, is the draught of his Bill, A. D. 1691, to this effect:—"That at no time hereafter any person, under what qualification soever, shall be enabled, by any licence, dispensation, union, or any other way whatsoever, to hold two benefices with cure of souls, which shall be (measuring between the Churches

of the said two benefices by the common high road from each other) above the distance of five miles.”—(p. 224.) The Bill was unanimously approved, in preference to several other draughts, by a meeting of the Archbishop and Bishops at Lambeth, and it was agreed that it should be offered to Parliament. “But the Lords were so fond of their privilege of qualifying Chaplains for pluralities that they would hearken to nothing.”*

Kennett, in his book called, *The Case of Impropriations, and of the Augmentation of Vicarages*, after tracing the history of parochial endowments from the earliest times, and the history also of the shameful *appropriations* of parish churches by the monasteries, then of the dissolution of the monasteries, and of the unhallowed *impropriations* of their revenues by lay hands,—observes that Bishop Moreton, (of Durham,) in the time of Charles I., acted on the principle, that in 27 Hen. VIII. c. 28, and 31 Hen. VIII. c. 13, on the dissolution of the monasteries, there is a *salvo*, reserving to all persons,—(in 31 Hen. VIII. appropriated vicarages are expressly mentioned,) —“all rights, &c. as if this Act had never been made;” and “that, consequently, whatever power the Bishop had over Churches appro-

* Birch's Life of Tillotson, 8vo. p. 81.

priate *before* the dissolution of the monasteries, he had and hath over churches impropriate *after*." Now before the dissolution, it is plain, the Bishop had a power to augment vicarages. (pp. 49—51, 249.)—Under Charles I. a voluntary Society of Benevolent Laymen was instituted for buying in impropriations, against which a decree in the Exchequer was passed, on account of some legally incorrect proceedings, but which "ought not to have been extinguished, but put into better hands." Many excellent individuals exercised a noble charity in this way, both before and after the beneficial Act of 29 Car. II. for confirming augmentations by ecclesiastical persons to small vicarages—as Spelman, the Archbishops Sancroft, Tenyson, and Bramhall; the Bishops Barrow, Gunning, Sanderson, Morley, Patrick;—under William III. the Bishops of Lincoln and Salisbury, with many Deans and Chapters;—and all along a great number of noblemen, and other opulent laymen. With the hope of rendering the First Fruits and Tenths, (given by Queen Anne for augmenting vicarages,) or the Bounty Board, more effectual, Kennett strongly recommends the re-institution, only with due legal caution, of proper ways and means for buying in of impropriations.—(pp. 225—237, 273, 323—346, 415, 433.)

Unhappily, for more than a century after the gift of the First Fruits and Tenths, the current of individual charity seems to have stagnated, as if the call for it had been superseded. But of late years God has put it into the heart of many of our Prelates and Dignitaries, and of many influential laymen also, again to give freely for the improvement of poor livings.*

As to the transfer of cathedral endowments to the improvement of small benefices,—is not this the indispensable inquiry,—what would the founder, in really *fair* construction, himself judge right, under some present demonstrable change of circumstances, had he been now alive? Supposing circumstances in the main to continue unaltered, and the necessary evidence, that he himself would approve of the transfer, to be unattainable, should we not, by attempting such transfers, convulse all property, and society itself, to their foundations? For two of the chief supports of society are these—*that every man shall have his own, and that every man shall be assured that whatever of his own he bequeaths by his last will, shall be disposed of as he directs.*

* The author ought to notice his own Diocesan, the Bishop of Gloucester, as having in his primary Charge announced his design to augment from his own income the small livings of his Diocese. It would be invidious to mention, as we might, many other names.

Now, on these mutually subsidiary methods of remedying by degrees the various evils of poorly provided livings, it would ill become the writer to say more than to submit the following questions to those who are competent and authorized to judge;—"Would not the Convocation, by its sentiments and concurrence, render essential service? And without some expression of the opinions of the great body of the Clergy, by their representatives, will not both sound policy and Christian integrity be exposed to great hazard?"

Again; we might ask whether, instead of being somewhat invidiously, and perhaps inequitably, taxed by others for the improvement of small benefices, the Bishops and the various orders of the higher Clergy, and principal Incumbents, might not be allowed full scope for arranging among themselves, from personal and experimental information, a better proportioned scale of contribution for this benevolent purpose. And should they not be furnished with full permission (but how, except by an efficient CONVOCATION?) to discuss and declare collectively any reasons for objecting to the scheme altogether, if they should think it inadmissible? Might they not at the same time be privileged to propose to the Clergy at large, (and perhaps to the Laity too,) in the only way they can, by some conventional measure

of their own, measures for the full extension of such *voluntary* gifts as have been by many already begun; bearing in mind the encouragement afforded in a late Act of Parliament, by granting, under certain conditions, the patronage to the donors? Besides, as to fixed contributions among the Clergy themselves, would not the act of Convocation, proposing the contributory scale alluded to, if duly sanctioned by the King, sufficiently *enable*, though it could not strictly legalize, the clerical collectors of the contributions? At the same time, being an isolated act, bearing no analogy or relation to merely civil measures, it would not afford, like a legislative injunction for taxing the Clergy, any precedent injurious to the security of property, nor any signal for subsequent spoliations of the Church, nor any inlet to invasions of other corporate or individual rights?

2. How are *Theological deficiencies* in the education of Ministers of the Establishment to be remedied, not only for their own benefit, but for raising the tone of sacred learning throughout the country? The obvious answer is,—*digitos ad fontes*;—institute in the Universities, who have already done, and are doing, much incidentally, occasionally, *collegiately*, (so to speak,) and in the public examinations,

for resuscitating theological studies ;—institute in the Universities a full, systematic, really academical plan, in which, not this and that college only, but all the colleges may work in harmony together, or in which all may equally participate ;—such as may no longer leave pupils in divinity to the passive hearing a professor's oration, but subject them to our admirable catechetical method, so successfully pursued in college-lectures ;—such as may furnish out a complete course of theological instruction, a punctual attendance upon which shall be indispensable to candidates for college testimonials, with a view to ordination. I have said, "institute in the Universities ;" I should have said, "*petition* the Universities to institute" such a plan. But who shall make the application? Who, but the Convention of the various orders of the ministers of the Established Church? Is the Legislature fairly qualified to make the suit, comprehending, as it obviously does, a large portion of influence and talent, bent upon lowering or generalizing, as far as possible, the sound gospel-doctrines in our Universities, and on stigmatizing the christian faithfulness of those hallowed seminaries, as no better than a bigoted exclusion of Socinians and Papists, as well as Protestant Dissenters—(all of whom, however, more properly speaking, exclude themselves)—

from the national treasures of erudition? An unanimous representation from the Episcopal Bench would doubtless have great weight with the Universities; but how much greater would be the effect, if the Deans, Archdeacons, and Proctors of the parochial Clergy, together with the Bishops, in Convocation assembled, should with one voice implore the Universities to systematize, in more entire accordance with the standard-principles of our martyred Reformers, their theological instructions?

3. As to *statistical* concerns, we shall only remark that the cry to the Church of England, from our poor and dense populations, and even from scattered villages, is—"More churches and chapels—more ministers—tenfold more." Be it so, that the State ought to take all proper means for securing a great increase of sacred edifices; but how pointedly would the counsels and aid of a well-ordered CONVOCATION *tell*, in furtherance of this object! And how impossible, if the Convocation be set aside, that their increase should be advantageously promoted upon a large scale, without engaging, by means of some other irregular, perhaps unconstitutional, and, after all, not equivalent nor sufficiently general associations, the suffrages and co-operation of the great body of the Clergy? I make this

remark, mainly under the idea that the necessary funds must *after all* be in a great measure sought from *voluntary* contributions. A professedly exclusive adoption of the voluntary principle is the error, we think, of the Protestant Dissenters of the present day. I say, professedly; for that they themselves do not in fact absolutely object to all endowments, is well known; the recent proceedings of our law-courts show, that they do contend for them with some earnestness.* In the Church of England, the unreserved approval of endowments and of their connexion with her establishment, is not incompatible with occasionally falling back on the voluntary principle; to which, indeed, must be ascribed the original of her endowments themselves. *King's Letters*, in aid of the Society for building and enlarging Churches, in aid of Societies undertaking to instruct the emancipated Negroes, &c., are instances of legitimate recurrence to this principle. Even the divinely-instituted Establishment of religion among the Jews admitted of the occasional exercise of *free* bounty in support of that religion; witness the preparatory gifts of David and his chief men, in the twenty-ninth chapter of the first book of Chronicles, for the erection of the Temple. Accordingly the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry has recently, on a par-

* See the Reports of the Case of Lady Hewley's Charity.

ticular occasion, in a noble manner had recourse to the voluntary method, under the immediate encouragement and direction of the Bishop; and with marked support from the Clergy, and from great numbers of the Laity. In the four Arch-deaconries, several district-committees of Clergy and Laity jointly are formed, for raising contributions, and for ascertaining the extent of the want of church-accommodation, within their respective limits; these are to communicate from time to time by means of deputations, with a central committee for the whole diocese. The donations have already amounted to nearly twelve thousand pounds, the annual subscriptions to about six hundred pounds, for assisting in the erection and enlargement of churches and chapels. The plan was originated in the diocese of Chester, has recently been adopted in that of St. Asaph, and is said to be commenced in those of Worcester and Chichester. But whether in these four dioceses a desirable unity of plan and proceeding has been preserved, appears to be uncertain. It seems but too probable, unless the smooth and inviting process of promiscuous equalisation, be adopted, and in consequence, church property, and all property, and civil society itself be shaken to their foundations, that the necessary multiplication of places of public worship in the Church will depend mainly

upon this—whether the great landed proprietors, and whether the affluent Clergy and Laity throughout the kingdom, will understand the signs of the times, and be ready, like their own zealous ancestors, or, like David, and his princes, and great men, (1 Chron. xxix. 3,) to say—“Because we have set our *affection* to the house of our God, we have of our own proper good, of gold and silver, given to the house of our God.” To their hearts and consciences doubtless the appeal ought to be sounded, and that not in two or three dioceses only, but throughout all the dioceses of the kingdom. But here is the problem to be solved. How can such an appeal be made with sufficiency both of unity and extent of operation? Must we not answer again by the CONVOCA-
TION, and by the CONVOCA-
TION *alone*?

In regard to supplying more ministers, correspondently with the increase of places of worship,—I mean faithful and devoted ministers,—omitting other obvious topics, I would confine myself to one peculiarly important source of supply; namely, ordaining on some reasonable conditions well-approved applicants from among the ministers of Dissent;—a practice in which there is a double gain, recovery from error, and accession to the standard-truth. The impediments, almost always unhappily opposed to it at present, are not only of great mag-

nitude, as might fairly be expected, (in order to exclude hypocrites, and to secure the encouragement of preference to candidates, nourished from their birth in the bosom of the Church,)—but physically and absolutely insuperable.

A Dissenting minister of good repute, of real learning and piety, applies for Ordination ; states his conscientious conviction of the scriptural character of our Doctrines, Services and three-fold ministerial Orders, wants no revision of the Liturgy, (I am not merely *supposing* a case, it has actually occurred,) avows his belief that dissent, under existing circumstances, is schism, or unlawful separation, produces unexceptionable testimonials, is willing to cease his ministration among Dissenters for many months. He is told he must keep his three years' residence at one of the Universities. He urges his advanced time of life, his large family, his total inability, on resigning his present charge, to support himself and them for three years. It does not signify ; there is no help for it ; his academical residence he must keep. He goes back in the face of conscience, (who will cast the first stone at him ?) through sheer family-necessity, to his former yoke ;—a hard case, surely, in many points of view, and in the main not of rare occurrence. But is there no alternative, short of the academical residence ? Might not the CON-

VOCATIONS (and who else could?) discuss and decide upon some fair scrutiny and probationary course, sufficient to secure, without inviting, an increased supply of faithful clergymen from the very ministers of Dissent?

We have necessarily omitted many subordinate topics, which would naturally come under the heads of this chapter. We cannot however close it without remarking, in reference to the *Commutation of Tithes*, that however desirable the object, every thing turns, as far as the *just* attainments of that object is concerned, upon providing a *real* equivalent; *real* in respect of security, (which our forefathers, says Burke, made as firm as the ground we tread upon,) as well as in respect of the estimated value. We would just advert also to a plain truth, little understood, or little attended to, that amidst all the violent objections generally raised I am sorry to say, even by respectable Dissenters, against paying *Church-rates*, THE FACT IS, THEY PAY NOTHING; unless a man may be said to pay away that which does not come out of his own pocket; for the church-rate was allowed for in the tenant's agreement for his lease with the proprietor. It is simply a perpetually transmitted rent-charge upon lands and houses. Nor does the proprietor in fact pay any church-rate, for his property was

inherited or bought by him, subject, as he well knew, to this charge. Now who so fit as the CONVOCATION, duly and wisely conducted, to express the honourable and upright sentiments, (for such I believe them to be,) of the Bishops and Clergy on these subjects ; and at the same time to assist the civil power in any really safe and righteous adjustments ?

CHAPTER IX.

The Church's own consultations a principal mean of promoting internal union among her members.

How could an increase of internal union among all orders in the Church of England—or, lest we should be supposed to be contemplating union for any purposes of party, or for narrow church-interests, or for dominion over any man's faith, we would rather say,—how could a general “unity of the *spirit* in the bond of peace” be promoted, and a general earnestness of sympathy and prayer excited, under God, among our Bishops, Clergy, and Laity? The answer naturally occurs, “By means of the exhortations and example of a well-ordered deliberative assembly of the chief representatives of the Church, met together in order to obtain full episcopal guidance, and for comprehensive mutual infor-

mation and counsel.”—“ But what if strife and confusion, the very opposite result to peace and unity, should ensue ; nay, must necessarily be anticipated ? ”—Why necessarily ? The occasions of former contention have been moderated or removed ; must the swell necessarily remain, when the storm has subsided ? Ministers of the National Church have not of late years, no, not even to this day of miscalled liberality, been found to plead for complaisance towards open or ill-concealed Socinianism, nor on that score given any just ground of offence to their brethren. The era of the *Feathers’* Tavern is gone by. The controversy also of spiritual regeneration has been suspended for some time past, or rather, one may hope, has been softened down into a calm consideration, and even a serious persuasion, of the *thing*, in the minds of many who yet scruple to adopt the *term*. On the subject of Election and Predestination, a greater readiness to “ hear the word at the mouth of God,” instead of speculating for ourselves ; a more solemn and forbearing, and less controversial spirit, prevails apparently among reflecting churchmen at the present time. There seems to be a greater willingness to shut up minuter differences in the solid scriptural statements of the admirably moderated seventeenth Article of our Church ; a more devout contentedness to sit with the Apostle at the

brink of this mystery, drawing from it holy motives and consolations, and crying out in his strain, "O the depth!—the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!"

Again; the wild enthusiasm which some time ago was springing up as a root of bitterness and strife, has probably by this time wrought its own sufficient cure, and is not now likely to occasion contentions among the assembled Clergy, how much soever it may still retain its hold on some misguided individuals. Is it then too much to expect, that in this day of frequent "rebuke and blasphemy from without," against "all that is called God, or that is worshipped;"—when the very existence of God's Church, as a National Institution, is menaced by an unparalleled coalition, between Popery and Infidelity, and another unlooked-for party, the main body (I say it with unfeigned grief) of the orthodox Dissenters, of whom we are almost ready to exclaim—" *Et tu, Brute?*"—is it too much to expect, that the Bishops and their Presbyters of the Established Church would come together for consultation at such a juncture with earnest prayer for the Holy Spirit; and would see something of the hand of God in all these perils and conflicts, as righteously visited on themselves, and the Church, and the Nation,

for transgressions of his covenant? Is it too much to expect from a God of mercy, that numbers who would now assemble in Convocation, might by genuine sympathy "be partakers" together largely in "the afflictions of the Gospel," and might hear the words of our divine Redeemer, as if addressed to our own Church;—"I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love; remember therefore whence thou art fallen and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and I will remove thy candlestick out of his place?" Is it altogether unreasonable to indulge the hope, that individuals, that many or even most of the individuals, present, might be led; under the circumstances of the times, to apply the solemn warning to their own bosoms, and meet together with some genuine emotions of self-humiliation, and of faith that worketh by love? Here is the very essence and sure earnest of salutary measures for promoting genuine unity. Self-seeking is the separating principle. Self-denial, truth, love,—“speaking (and doing) the truth in love,”—that is union.—But having referred to this subject before, I pass on to the next head.

CHAPTER X.

The Church's own consultations a principal mean of promoting external union between the Church and other Communions.

1. UNDER the head of Church Improvements, it is very important to discuss the formation of religious unions externally between the Church of England, and such Protestant bodies as agree with her in the main points of doctrine. Is it possible that any greater facilities for conformity could be afforded without compromise by the Church? In that case, is there any prospect of winning over to the Church any considerable number of doctrinally sound Protestant *Dissenters*, properly so called, as contradistinguished from the *Wesleyan Methodists*? Or does the danger of vacillation, and indeed of alteration at all, in the standards of the Church oppose an insurmountable obstacle? And, as far as conciliation of Dissenters forms one reason for pro-

viding such facilities, have not the great bodies of Dissenters (I would always mention this with great sorrow of heart) set it at nought, by declaring in the most unqualified terms, that on high religious grounds, as they think, they would refuse all fellowship with an Established Church, however unobjectionable, nay, however pure and spiritual in its doctrines, constitution, and discipline, *simply* because it is established? * These questions individuals will answer, according to their best judgment; but, if there be no other resource, the questions will be renewed, and the minds of our ministers and people will still be troubled by them. But the Church, acting duly, *as a body*, in the exercise of united wisdom and truth, would *decide* them for her members; and surely none else could.

2. Again; what shall we say to the *Presbyterian Church of Scotland*, and to the *Wesleyan Methodists*?

(1.) As to the former, Dr. Chalmers has de-

* It ought, however, to be noticed to their honour, and with gratitude to God, that some eminent Dissenting ministers have begun to protest against the violence of others in their communion. I refer especially to Dr. John Pye Smith, Mr. J. Clayton, and Mr. James, of Birmingham. But I am afraid, it does not appear, that either of those respected individuals has disclaimed dissent upon *principle*.

clared himself in favour of some co-operation and concord between the two Established Churches of England and Scotland. But how can this be accomplished, as long as each of these Churches retains her own peculiar views regarding ministerial ordination and offices? Are any conciliatory explanations on both sides possible? If so, would the feeling expressed by this eminent individual be general in the Church of Scotland; and would it be met by a general and correspondent feeling among the prelates, clergy, and people of our own Church?—These again are points on which the CONVOCATION of the Church of England, and the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the Church of Scotland, and none but these Synods, can negotiate; on which they only can deliver an available opinion, and promote, where decision may be at present unattainable, some salutary adjustment.

But if the danger of patching up an unhallowed treaty, on the one hand, or of ripping open the scars of old controversies, and inflicting new wounds, on the other, be deemed so imminent, that no overt act of mutual recognition can be thought of; are there no conceivable messages, or deputations, which the Convocation might, and which none but the Convocation could, and which, for reasons of the highest importance, the Convocation ought to, interchange with the

General Assembly? Surely some topics of long-known agreement might be found ; some touches of mutual sympathy, (in these times of infidelity as well as worldliness, and amidst the assaults *ad internecionem*, made or meditated, from the same unexpected quarters, against each of these religious establishments,) might readily suggest themselves, for an inoffensive introduction to friendly communications between them. Their creeds may be regarded as the same,* their authorized confessions of faith, on the whole, are similar ; whilst most other protestant denominations set themselves against all formal creeds and confessions. The recent increase of piety in both Churches, one may hope, draws them closer in doctrinal stedfastness to each other, in the midst of declensions and apostasies around them. Both Churches are denounced by the same assailants, the enemies of Religion and the enemies of Establishments, and threatened, as Establishments, with the same utter destruction ; whether gradually, as some calculate, by the continual droppings of contentious words, or by the more summary

* The Church of Scotland, at the end of its Shorter Catechism, adopts the Apostle's Creed ; and in its Larger Catechism, questions 8, 36, &c., as well as in its Confession, chap. 2 and 8, enlarges at great length, to the same intent, and often in the same terms, as the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds.

process of political explosions. Thus far they have common interests, common conflicts, and common dangers, a common course likewise to follow of faith and firmness, of self-correction and self-defence, "shewing all meekness to all men," even to enemies. Ought they not then, in mere kindness and sympathy towards each other, no less than with views of self-preservation, to confer together on such topics of coincidence as these, and so "strengthen each others hands in God?" But how can they confer, except by a fully operative Convocation on the one part, as well as a General Assembly on the other?

2. To come now to the *Wesleyans*. — In these times, one obvious step in order to union among Protestants, that is, among sound scriptural Christians, is a holy and honourable scheme, (should such a thing be possible,) for bringing back the Wesleyans to some degree of connexion with the National Church, if not to complete church-fellowship, yet as confederates and supernumeraries; like the varying and irregular, but very useful light-infantry of a well-organized army; or, to speak still more to the point, (for we must not be above copying a valuable lesson even from an adversary,) like the anomalous itinerating orders in the Church of Rome. Mr. Southey, first in his conclusion of his *Life of Wesley*, and afterwards in his *Collo-*

quies, suggests some such healing measure. A rough copy of a detailed plan would be an important point in advance. The writer's hazarding a sketch of this kind will not, it is hoped, be deemed an act of presumption, or of self-intrusion into the province of his superiors in attainments and capacity, as well as in station. It is comprised in the remarks that follow.

(1.) In regard to doctrines—might not the objections felt, by many zealous and intelligent members of our Church, to any kind of conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodists, simply because the very name of Methodists is in their view inseparably connected with certain religious extravagances and delusions, be greatly mitigated, by means of some mutual and duly authorized communications? Would not the Wesleyans generally renounce the doctrines of the *sensible* revelations of Christ in justification, and of the *absolute* perfection of the fully sanctified person? On referring to Wesley's own *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*, I find in his statements on Justification, in Rom. iii. 20—26, and of Perfection, in all the principal passages where they occur, nothing at all extravagant. To be perfect, in his view as a commentator, is to be holy, and in its highest stages, to be "in every respect, inwardly and outwardly holy." Heb. xiii. 21.—"Can any thing more be done,"

(it was asked at the Conference) "to guard against improper [heterodox] preachers getting admittance into our connexion? Answer. In the examination of the candidates, let each be required to answer any question the President may ask him, respecting the doctrines contained in the eight volumes of sermons, which Mr. Wesley left in his Will to the Preachers."—(*Minutes of Conference*, A.D. 1798.)—"What additional resolution can be passed in order to preserve our societies from heresies? Answer. No person shall on any account be permitted to retain any official situation in our societies, who holds opinions contrary to the total depravity of human nature, the divinity and atonement of Christ, the influence and witness of the Spirit, and Christian holiness, as believed by the Methodists."—(*Minutes*, A.D. 1807.)—"The sacred Scriptures, and these only, are the test to which all the doctrines of Methodism are submitted, and by such an interpretation as is perhaps most conveniently expressed by the term, orthodox, that is, such as is for the most part found in the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England, from which indeed almost all of them are derived."*

(2.) Then, as to Discipline and Church-order

* See Warren's *Chronicles of Wesleyan Methodism*.—Vol. i. p. 4, 152, 159.

—is the case quite desperate? Is there any thing in the practice of the WESLEYANS under these heads, however operose and cumbersome its machinery, irreparably at variance with Church of England principles? Are there not some things in their discipline which in an exemplary manner embody and enforce these principles? Obviously there would arise questions of the greatest nicety and difficulty;—as, How could the stipulations on both sides be so adjusted, that the Wesleyan body generally might be admitted to a degree of alliance, or to an *inchoate* and *incomplete* communion with the Established Church; and yet no essential church-principles be compromised, nor any fundamental alteration be made by the Wesleyans in the outward mechanism of their system? On what conditions should *individuals*, or *congregations*, still adhering to the original peculiarities of that system, be received by the Church into *full* communion? With what limitations of episcopal superintendence could their chapels be episcopally licensed or consecrated? With what form of words, and with what restrictions, as to the use of the Liturgy in sacramental service, might *preachers*, recommended by the Conference, and approved by the Bishop, be episcopally ordained as Deacons and Presbyters to minister in Wesleyan chapels, but *only* as a sort of Home Missionaries among

the almost pagans of our poor population? With what farther provisos might such duly-ordained, but partially-received, ministers, be *fully* advanced at length to the exercise of their office in the regular congregations of the Establishment? There are confessedly very great difficulties in the way; but is the case quite desperate? And when we consider the vital importance of winning, (if possible,) and preserving perhaps in perpetuity to the Church, and to healthful piety, by a new, but honourable and uncompromising, scheme of approximation, so large a proportion of the lower orders, not even now entirely alienated, is it not worth while to make the attempt?

(3.) The government of the Wesleyan societies, especially in regard to the preachers, approximates already far more nearly to the Church of England, than to avowed Dissenters; or rather it mainly differs from the ecclesiastical economy of the latter, whilst it agrees to a considerable extent with that of the former. It is neither purely democratic, as some Dissenting writers represent their own plan, nor, (to use the novel expression of one not so levelling in his sentiments,) "*essentially* popular." It is ministerial and authoritative with only a subordinate, or at most greatly modified, admission of the voice of the people. This will appear from

a very slight reference to the Three Authentic Documents, on which confessedly is founded the whole system of Methodism.

The first is Mr. Wesley's *deed of Declaration, and establishment of the Conference of the people called Methodists*. This deed describes the Conference as consisting of one hundred preachers, whom it mentions by name, with special provisions for filling up that number as vacancies occur. In the Conference it vests the whole management of their chapels, and that under the highest legal sanction; for this deed, which he executed in 1784, was enrolled in the Court of Chancery. The second document is the "*Large Minutes of the Conference*," from 1744 to 1789, digested by Mr. Wesley himself, denominated "*Minutes of several Conversations between the Rev. John Wesley, M. A., and others*," and "held by all the preachers as the collection of the most important and official rules by which they are to be governed. It is therefore according to this public instrument, that every candidate for admission upon trial, as a travelling preacher, is examined." The third is the "*Plan of Pacification agreed upon between the Preachers and the People in 1795*," together with the subsequent "*regulations made at Leeds in 1797*," which may be regarded as a kind of supplement to the Pacification. These two last

documents commit to certain principal lay members, supposed to be "the best qualified to give the sense of the people," the temporal affairs of the chapels, and likewise a certain right of interference in removing, (when pure discipline requires such a step,) but *not* in appointing, preachers; for their appointments still remain solely with the Conference. Moreover, according to the *Pacification* and *Regulations*, the Lord's supper cannot be administered in any chapels, nor, when once administered, be discontinued, except with the consent of the Conference; and "those only can administer it who are authorized by the Conference, and at such times and in such manner only as the Conference shall appoint."

In these acknowledged constitutional instruments of Wesleyan Methodism, and in the actual conduct of a large portion, if not of the generality, of its followers, we may trace unequivocal renunciations of absolute dissent, and a certain lingering *substratum* of attachment to the Established Church. The Large Minutes of the Conference, by which every candidate for admission upon trial, as a travelling preacher, is examined, say expressly that—"God's design in raising up preachers called Methodists, we may reasonably believe, was not to form any new sect, but to reform the nation, particularly the Church, and

to spread scriptural holiness over the land." An "assistant preacher" (who is the head preacher in the circuit) "will be qualified for his charge," (says Wesley, in these Minutes,) amongst other means, "by loving the Church of England, and resolving not to separate from it."—"Let this be well observed;" "I fear when the Methodists leave the Church, God will leave them; but if they be thrown out of it they will be guiltless."—"Exhort all that were brought up in the Church to continue therein; set the example yourself; immediately change every plan that would hinder their being at Church at least two Sundays in four; let all the servants in our preaching-houses go to Church once a Sunday at least; exhort all our people to keep close to the Church and Sacrament; warn them all against niceness in hearing—a prevailing evil! Warn them also against despising the prayers of the Church; against calling our society the Church; against calling our preachers ministers; our houses meeting-houses. Do not license them as Dissenters. Although we call sinners to repentance in all places of God's dominion, and although we frequently use *extempore* prayers, and unite together in a religious society, yet we are not Dissenters, in the only sense which our law acknowledges viz. those who renounce the service

of the Church ; we do not ; we dare not separate from it ; we are not seceders, nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The seceders laid the very foundation of their work in judging and condemning others. We laid the foundation of our work in judging and condemning ourselves. What they do in America, or what *their* minutes say on this subject, is nothing to us ; we will keep in the good old way ; and never let us make light of going to Church either by word or deed.”*

Even the *Plan of Pacification*, and the *supplementary Regulations*, though they seem virtually to revoke some of these principles of Mr. Wesley and his primary associates, do, nevertheless, require that “the Lord’s supper shall always be administered,” when it is introduced into any chapel, “according to the form of the Established Church, only with permission to the person who administers it to give out hymns, to use exhortation and *extempore* prayer ;” that it “shall never be administered on those Sundays on which it is administered in the parish Church ;” lastly, that where cases occur among the Wes-

* I am happy to find, since the above was written, that the pithy notes of Dr Dealtry in the Appendix to his late *Charge*, contain the same or similar quotations ; and many other important details to the same purpose.

leyan Societies, of the performance of Divine Service in the Church-hours, "the officiating preacher shall read either the service of the Church, their venerable father's abridgment of it, or at least the lessons appointed by the Calendar; it being at the same time recommended that he should prefer either the full service or the abridgment." Even the points in which they have erred the most from the "simplicity which is in Christ," whether through controversial exaggerations, or enthusiastic delusions, they do not seem to have knowingly opposed the Church, but rather to have fancied her "form of sound words," if received with full fervour of spirit, pleadable in their favour.*

Once more; they have hitherto, as a body, uniformly kept themselves aloof from all concern with those who in the present day, however opposed to each other, concur in avowedly aiming at the destruction of the Established Church. I have said *as a body*; because recently a party has sprung up among the Wesleyans, in Man-

* See, for all these particulars, *Chronicles of Wesleyan Methodism*, by Samuel Warren, LL.D." 2 vols., a work of authority among the *Wesleyans*. Its character is not affected by the active part which the author has unhappily taken in the recent schism. The passages appealed to upon the present occasion will be chiefly found in vol. i. pp. 7—9, 34—42, 79, 223—235, 268, 269.

chester, London, and various other places, who seem, as if by their violence against the Conference, and against all ecclesiastical government, they would almost rend the Society in pieces.* Still the Wesleyan Methodists, (and we must add, the Methodists in the Connexion of the late Countess of Huntingdon,) collectively considered, are the only very numerous classes of dissentients, if we must call them so, from the Church of England, who are not hostile in the *abstract* to the very principle of all Establishments, and to the very existence of our own; —who are not deluded by the vain imagination, that by subverting the National Church they would be doing “God service.”

Thus there is a professed agreement in main doctrines, a certain approximation at least to congeniality respecting Church polity, an assi-

* See, their organ, the *New Methodist Magazine*. See also on the other side, the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, for 1835, January, pp. 38, 39; February, pp. 129, 155; March, p. 225. The addresses of the Conference for 1833 and 1834, contain warnings against such lamentable agitations. “In spite of all that I can do,” (wrote Wesley almost prophetically in one of his last letters,) “many of them [the Wesleyans] will separate from it [the Church of England.] These will be so bold, &c. . . . In flat opposition to these, I declare once more, that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment will ever separate from it.” See his Letter in the *Christian Observer* for May, 1830.

milation on the great question of Church Establishments, between the Church of England and the Wesleyan Methodists.

But notwithstanding all this, who, except the CONVOCATION, could negotiate effectually, who except the CONVOCATION could venture to negotiate at all, with the Conference, in regard to any such scheme of incipient concord, as we have imagined, between those erring Children, and their perhaps not altogether blameless Mother? And who will sternly deny that both these parties, especially as being assailed by common adversaries, ought, if possible, by means of CONVOCACTIONS wisely ordered for their mutual and general benefit, to make some primary advances towards reconciliation?

3. Though I cannot altogether omit, yet I shall not attempt to dwell upon, the duty and necessity of a friendly correspondence between the regular Conventions respectively of the Churches of England and Ireland, and between the Church of England *as such*, on the one hand, and the *Episcopal Church in Scotland*, the *Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States*, and the *Protestant Churches of the Continent*, on the other;—nor shall I discuss at large the duty and necessity, laid upon the Established Church, of standing forward *as such*, in a missionary attitude, in order to nurture and

strengthen by her synodal declarations, *Protestant Societies for Missions*, especially those of her *own* Communion, both in our colonies, and among the heathen ;—because, if such efforts be possible, their duty and necessity will be conceded. Impossible they are, no doubt, under our present circumstances, and whilst the Church of England cannot simply *as a Church*, engage in any act, or express any sentiment. But let well regulated active Convocations, or the more primitive kinds of Synods, be holden from time to time ; and how feasibly, how appropriately to the present eventful crisis, how beneficially to each of the Churches concerned, and to Protestant Christendom in general, would such enlarged exercises of Church-fellowship be instituted and carried on !

CONCLUSION.

UPON the whole, putting these various considerations together,—the Church's present peculiar necessities; the suitableness of Convocations, or other more entirely unequivocal Church-synods, for the nation's sake to relieve them; the various ways in which that relief may be imparted, namely, by checking abuses of Patronage, by remedying defects in Discipline, by calming in reasonable and devout minds eagerness for a revision of the Liturgy, by protesting against erroneous doctrines, by aiding in an explanation or amendment of the Protestant Oath of Supremacy, by considering remedies for statistical defects, and for defects in theological education, by promoting union among churchmen themselves, and between the Established Church, and other Protestant Communions;—putting these considerations together, we may venture, I appre-

hend, to conclude, that REVIVED, EFFICIENT, AND DULY - REGULATED CONVOCATIONS, (to be summoned, if possible, at a *different* time from the Parliament)—or rather, since somewhat of a semi-political character may still seem to adhere to Convocations, that a RESTORATION OF PROVINCIAL and DIOCESAN SYNODS*—is imperatively called for by the present exigencies of this Church and Nation ; and would be one of the best adapted means, sometimes the only mean, of defending, ameliorating, and invigorating the Church of England ; and thereby would, under God, greatly conduce to the diffusion of his heavenly and eternal blessings through the whole realm.

I have all along scarcely suffered the idea to rise in my mind, that the civil power would ever

* “ The model of Ecclesiastical Discipline ” — “ laid by those who had the chief management of these matters,” (under Henry VIII.,) — “ was plainly this ; to restore the use of Diocesan and Provincial Councils ; and therein to transact those affairs which were properly conciliary, and which only the later practice of the foregoing century had brought within the cognizance of the Convocation.” The Provincial Councils were to be held, not statedly, but *si contigerit in ecclesiâ gravem aliquando exoriri causam*. — “ That this was the design of our first Reformers, the body of ecclesiastical laws, drawn up by authority of that very act of which we are now speaking,” (25 Hen. VIII.) “ sufficiently shews.” — Wake, *State of the Church*, p. 553.

so far forget its duty to God, as knowingly to do wrong to his Church. But, as a remaining argument for the course pleaded for in these pages, it may be asked, if any act of sacrilege or injustice should be unhappily inflicted on the Church, may she not be permitted, *as a Church*, to expostulate? And how can she expostulate but by Convocations, or Provincial Synods? If in an evil hour she should be “wounded in the house of her friends,” is the Church the only society which may not cry out when stricken, or rather which may not say in meekness, like her Saviour, “if I have done evil, bear witness of that evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?” But the whole question comes to this one point,—the due employment of Church-councils, in some form or other, is GOD’S OWN PROVISION FOR REGULATING AND BENEFITING HIS CHURCH IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS. Yes, we may point to such Councils, and say all in three words,—GOD’S OWN PROVISION! That is enough. GOD’S OWN PROVISION surely we must use; use in faith, according to GOD’S will, and trust GOD for the result.

Let, then, our Fathers and Rulers in the Church, let our brethren, let our people at large, of all ranks, be entreated to consider, if our Church-councils become extinct, or which is the same thing, continue to be a mere form, whether

the relinquishment of them be not a suicidal act as far as the Church herself is concerned, an act of spiritual usurpation on the magistrate's and on the nation's part, and on the part of all, an act of a treasonable complexion against the authority of JESUS CHRIST.

Our Civil Governors, indeed, themselves seem, at this time, to contemplate the speedy employment of such Councils, in the usual form probably of CONVOCATIONS. Otherwise, it cannot be supposed that in the Ecclesiastical Commission, lately issued, (for the Church of England and the nation at large owe doubtless a tribute of gratitude to his Majesty,) a reference would have been made to some new arrangement of episcopal *duties*, and some new modifications of cathedral institutions. For such measures, when preparatorily made by the Commission, seem to require, of course, at a subsequent period the consent of the Church herself, *as a body*; if we may judge from former precedents, and especially from that of the Commission in 1689, which proposed subjects of similar extent, and was objected to by some of the Commissioners themselves and others, and was vindicated on this very ground, that all signified nothing, unless the Convocation approved it.*

* See a *Tract* by Dr. Tenison, on this subject; and Calamy's *Abridgment of Baxter's Life and Times*, vol. i. p. 457.

The Clergy therefore, and the Laity too, if these things be so, are obliged and encouraged, without delay, to hold legitimate and constitutional meetings, both jointly and, perhaps, separately, upon this special subject. Especially the Clergy ought, by requisitions to the Archdeacons, to assemble for the purpose of petitioning their Sovereign and their respective Archbishops; in particular, imploring his Majesty graciously to direct the Archbishops of England and Ireland, so that they may summon their several Convocations, in order to consider questions relative to spiritual discipline, possibly as proposed for the Convocation in 1689, and other points connected with the spiritual welfare and utility of the Church.

But before I take a final leave of the reader, let me, with all affectionate urgency, as becomes a minister of JESUS CHRIST, endeavour briefly to touch a hallowed string, too apt to be overlooked in discussions, like the present. May *you* feel, reader, whilst you candidly listen, something in your inmost heart that responds to the calls of heavenly truth! For is there not an extraordinary moral conflict going on at this time, in our own and other kingdoms of the earth; to which political changes only bear the

same relation, as the external index of some mysteriously agitated machinery to the internal spring? Is it not "the quarrel of God's Covenant," of God's Holy Scriptures? May not all that is wretched in the sister-island be traced to the desperate efforts, made by the apostate Church of Rome, (after having been foiled in argument whilst opposing the free distribution of the Bible,) in order to subvert the Protestant religion, that is, the true religion of the WRITTEN WORD, by means of popular violence, and bloodshed? May not, likewise, the false liberality of religious indifference, and the pliant semi-infidelity, which for some years past have been fearfully propagated among all classes, even the lowest,—as well as the false zeal of the idolatrous apostasy,—be all ascribed in effect to this one gratuitous assumption, that the BIBLE is not the *really* inspired, or not the *only* inspired WORD of THE LIVING GOD? Must not the spreading insubordination to lawful human authority, and the national abuses of the Gospel in our times, be all referred to a similar cause? And are not the worldly-mindedness under a Christian name, and the self-exalting delusions of the age, instances virtually of the same kind of unbelief? What then is the part that *you yourself* are taking in this great conflict of principles? Under whose banners are *you* enlisted?

Let me, farther, as a minister of Christ, entreat you to put these questions to your own bosom. Is not man ruined by sin? Is not creation marred by the sins of angels and of men? Did not GOD send into this world HIS SON JESUS CHRIST, by whom "all things were created," in order that, taking from creation human nature into union with himself in his own divine person, He might ultimately deliver creation at large from bondage; might provide by his own sufferings and glory, and by the agency of his SPIRIT, for restoring all who truly and penitently believe in HIM, to communion with GOD, and at length to heavenly happiness; and might finally shut up all the ungodly and impenitent "in their own place?" Have *you*, then, as yet, heartily applied to the SAVIOUR for spiritual renovation? —May both of us, the reader and the writer, be made to feel that without this restoration to communion with GOD, by the mediation of CHRIST, though we be ever so zealous for the externals of his Church, we shall be still enemies to her spirit; but that, on the contrary, in *thus* returning to GOD, we shall uphold, however obscure our lot, her best interests, in this disordered world; and when the SON of MAN shall come in his glory, we shall be numbered with the blessed company of all his faithful people, whom he shall

then “present unto himself a glorious Church,”
“not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing,”
“a holy Church without blemish,” eternal in the
heavens.

APPENDIX.

No. I. Page 9.

THE surrender of the Clergy's right to tax themselves is viewed in different lights by different writers.

"In this reign," (that of Charles II.,) "the Clergy were not so kindly dealt with by the court," and were taxed by Parliament. "This new method was so concerted, as to appear a plausible accommodation at the time, between the ministers of state and chief members of the House of Commons on the one side, and the governing prelates on the other; there was a proviso made that might enable the clergy to reassume their ancient privilege of taxing themselves, if they should find it more convenient for them."—Kennett's *Case of Impropriations*, p. 301. "The rule of subsidies being so high on the Clergy, they had submitted to be taxed by the House of Commons ever since the year 1665, though no memorials are left to inform us how that matter was consented to so generally, that no opposition of any sort was made to it."—Burnett's *Own Life and Times*, vol. ii. p. 281. Fol. 1734.

"It was the Clergy," (says Warburton,) "that freely gave up to the Legislature their ancient practice of taxing

themselves; in which they acted with the greatest justice as well as generosity.”—*Alliance*, 3rd Ed. p. 169.

I shall take the liberty of introducing here several miscellaneous particulars relative to the rights and privileges of Convocation.

In proof of what has been asserted above respecting the connexion of Ecclesiastical Commissions with Convocation, the following facts from Atterbury (*Rights, &c.* p. 183—206) are not contradicted by Wake. The Commission in 1533, for reviewing the canons, was *subsequent* to proceedings in the Convocation,* so was the order for translating the Bible in 1536;† the Commissions in 1537 and 1540, for the *Institution* and *Necessary Erudition* of a Christian man, and in 1540 for the rituals, had the authority of Convocation;‡ that in 1539, for the articles of religion was *preparatory* to their being considered by Convocation;§ that in 1542, for committing the translation of the Bible to the universities, had its consent;|| those in 1548 and 1551,¶ for the church offices, were proposed, and their acts confirmed, by the Convocation; that in 1550 for the

* See the Last Form of the Submission of the Clergy, *Rights, &c.* Appendix, No. VI. (d).

† Hist. of Reformation, vol. i. p. 187. Ed. 1715. Folio. See the words of the Petition in *Rights, &c.* P. 184.

‡ Hist. of Ref., (in which appear several inaccuracies on many of these points) vol. i. p. 234. See also Heylin's *Misc. Tracts*, p. 549, 569, and Remains of the Register of the First Convocation of Edward VI, as quoted by Atterbury.

§ See Preamble to 31 Hen. VIII, respecting the *Six Articles*.

|| See Minutes of the Convocation of 1542, as quoted by Atterbury.

¶ Hist. of Ref. vol. ii. p. 45. See also, as quoted by Atterbury,

Ordination-service consisted of its members known to have been then sitting.*

Bishop Burnett, speaking of the English Liturgy, and of the alterations that were afterwards made in it, has these words, "The authority of [the book and] those changes is wholly to be derived from the Convocation, who only consulted about them, and made them. And the Parliament did take that care in the enacting them, that might shew they did only add the force of a law to them; and in passing them it was ordered that the book of Common prayer and Ordination should only be read over, and even that was carried upon some debate; for many, as I have been told, moved that the book should be added to the act, as it was sent to the Parliament from the Convocation, without ever reading it; (but that seemed indecent and too implicit to others;) and there was no change made in a tittle by Parliament. So that they only enacted by a law what the Convocation had done." * * * *

"The Prelates and other divines that compiled [our forms for the more pure administration of the sacraments], did it by virtue of the authority they had from Christ, as pastors of his Church, which did empower them to teach the people the pure word of God, and to administer the sacraments, and perform all other holy functions, according to the Scriptures, the practice of the primitive Church, and the rules of expediency and reason; and this they ought to have done, though the civil power had opposed it; in which case their duty had been to have submitted to whatever severities and persecutions they might have been put to, for the name of Christ or the truth of his Gospel.

Fox, vol. ii. pp. 668, 701, and a Letter of Edward VI, in the 3rd year of his reign.

* Hist. of Ref. vol. ii. p. 133.

But on the other hand, when it pleased God to turn the hearts of those, which had the chief power, to set forward this good work; then they did, as they ought, with all thankfulness acknowledge so great a blessing, and accept and improve the authority of the civil power for adding the sanction of a law to the Reformation in all the parts and branches of it."—*Vindication of the Orders of the Church of England*, p. 53, 54, 74, 75; as quoted by Wheatley on the Common Prayer, p. 29.

Respecting how far the Convocation may of itself do business,—“I do humbly conceive,” says Wake, “that the Clergy may without any licence from the Crown, confer and treat about such matters as may be fit to be enacted by them, provided the Clergy do so confer and treat merely to apply to the Prince, if they shall think fit to proceed, for licence to attempt and enact thereupon. I will not dispute about whether the licence was by letter or word of mouth.”—*State of the Church*, &c. p. 614.

On February 12, 1707, the Archbishop had by royal writ prorogued the Convocation to March 5, following. An appeal was in consequence made by the Lower House to the Upper, in which they profess to have ascertained that from 1532 to 1705, (when the then sitting Convocation first assembled,) “there is no one instance of a writ of prorogation issuing during the session of Parliament.” . . . The whole having been laid before the Queen, her Majesty addressed a letter to the Archbishop, April 8, 1707, complaining that “the former illegal practices, contrary to the subordination of Presbyters to Bishops, were continued,” and declaring that the present appeal of the Lower House “amounted to a plain invasion of the royal supremacy;” so that “if any thing of the like nature were attempted in future, such means should be used for

punishing offences of this nature as are warranted by law."—See a tract intitled, "*His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury's Circular Letter to the Rt. Rev. the Lords Bishops of his province, in which is inserted her Majesty's gracious letter to him.*"

Bishop Hoadly's pernicious writings were censured by the lower House in 1717. A Committee of the Lower House of Convocation was appointed "to draw up a representation to be laid before the Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of Canterbury, concerning several dangerous practices and doctrines contained in the Bishop of Bangor's Preservative, and his Sermon preached [before the King,] March 31, 1717." Their report was read in the Lower House May 10, 1717, and voted *nem. con.* "to be received and entered upon the books of the said House." The Committee were Drs. Moss, Sherlock, Friend, Sprat, Cannon, Biss.*

"After the presentation of the report," says Rapin, "the government, out of regard to the interest of the constitution in Church and State, thought proper to put a stop to the proceedings by a prorogation to the 22nd of November. . . . The representation was never approved of by the Lower House, so as to be made the act of it." And he disparages the *Report of the Committee*, as if it had given a different account from himself. But the fact seems to have been simply this, that it was "received and entered on the books" without being followed up by any *act*, properly speaking, of that House.—*Hist. of England*, vol. iv. p. 537. London 1751.

The opinion mentioned above that the Convocation has not been actively engaged since 1717, is not correct, as appears from "*A Letter to the Rev. Dr. Lisle, Prolocutor of the Lower House of Convocation, upon a*

* See a pamphlet entitled *The Report of the Committee*, &c. &c.

refusal to receive or read a paper concerning Ecclesiastical Courts, clandestine marriages, &c.—(the fifth article of which paper refers to *the omission of governors and other members of some colleges to sign testimonials for orders.*)—By the Archdeacon of Lincoln, G. Reynolds. March 13, 1741. It contains the following quotation from an opening speech of the Prolocutor; “His Majesty, out of tender regard to the exigencies of the Church, had graciously condescended to indulge the Clergy in more frequent opportunities of meeting to consider of the state of religion, than of late years had been allowed to Convocations.” p. 8. . . . “We have accordingly met,” says the Archdeacon, “and though not often, yet as often as it pleaseth his Grace. At such meetings it hath been the practice to receive representations about the state of ecclesiastical affairs from all parts of the province; to give orders about the observance of canons, and the execution of laws in being; to implore the protection and favour of the Crown to the Synod, and, *previous* to this, to enter into considerations about the state of religion.” p. 10.

The complicated causes of insuperable distrust and disunion between the higher and lower clergy in 1689, causes peculiar to those times, are fully set forth by Calamy, in his *Abridgment of Mr. Baxter's Hist. of his Life and Times, &c.*, vol. i. pp. 457, 464, &c.

No. II. *Page 25 and Page 73.*

The following are instances of Councils in the second and third centuries.

“The faithful in Asia, having many times and in many parts of Asia, met together for this purpose, inquired into and exposed their novel and profane dis-

courses, and proved their heresy, they [the Montanists,] were thus expelled from the Church and inhibited from her communion."—Eusebius *Eccl. Hist.* v. 16, cent. 2. Vale's ed. Camb. 1720.

The churches of Asia (Minor) observed the 14th day of the month as "the first day of the feast of the Christian passover; all the other Churches of the world observed the day of our Lord's resurrection." On this question "Synods and Conventions of *Bishops* were holden, and all unanimously, by ecclesiastical epistles, recorded and distributed their decree to all around them." Eusebius specifies similar synodical letters of the churches in Palestine, Rome, Gaul, Pontus, Osroene, in or near Mesopotamia, and in very many other places, upon the same subject.—*Ibid.* v. 23, cent. 2.

Dionysius of Alexandria states it to have been his own practice to receive penitent heretics into the Church by imposition of hands; but adds that the custom of baptizing them was not only received in Africa, but that "Bishops long before his time in very populous churches, and Synods of the *brethren*, in Iconium and Synnada, and in many places, approved of that custom."—*Ibid.* vii. 7. cent. 3.—The Synods in Iconium and Synnada, "*long before his time*," were those held there more immediately against the Montanists in cent. 2.

Paul of Samosata, having broached his heresy, which represented our Lord as a mere man, and Dionysius being detained at home by illness, "the other shepherds of the churches met together, as against a waster of the flock of Christ," at Antioch; namely, "the *Bishops* of Cæsarea, Pontus, Jerusalem, Cæsarea (adjacent to Jerusalem,) Bosra, and thousands more, (*μυριοις*) including "*the Presbyters and Deacons*." The last Synod held against him, in which he was excommunicated, was attended by very many Bishops, probably not less than seventy. The epistle then agreed upon is addressed to "the Bishops

of Rome and Alexandria, and to all their fellow-ministers throughout the world, and to all the Church Catholic under heaven, by the *Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons* (who officiated in the dioceses (παροικούντες) of the neighbouring cities and states,) and by the Churches of God."—*Ibid.* vii. 27, 28. cent. 3.

I subjoin some farther proofs of councils, all holden in the third century.

The Presbyters and Deacons at Rome, (the bishopric being vacant,) in their letter to Cyprian, are of opinion, "that he should handle the case of the lapsed by summoning to a conference *Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons, Confessors*, and likewise *Laymen to stand by*; for it seems to us very invidious and distressing, not to examine by means of many what appears to have been committed by many."—Cyprian. Oxford, ed. 1691, Ep. 30.

In the great Council of Carthage, against baptizing heretics, A.D. 256, there were assembled "*very many Bishops* [namely 87] from the province of Africa, from Numidia and Mauretania, with *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, a very great part also of the *common people (plebis)* being present." It was a kind of General Council, the most celebrated of all that were convened before Constantine.—*Ibid.* p. 229.

"If the number of Bishops in Africa seemed insufficient, we wrote upon this same subject [the treatment of the lapsed] to Cornelius our colleague, who himself also with his Co-bishops, after they had held a council, agreed in opinion with us."—*Ibid.* Ep. 4.

Marcianus, a Novatianist, "received his sentence [of excommunication] from a very great number of us priests (*sacerdotum*;) who were present."—Ep. 68. A.D. 254.

Firmilianus, Bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, writing to Cyprian, enumerates several ordinances, which here-

ties ought not to participate, and adds, "All this, when we had assembled in one place long ago at Iconium, and were met by those from Galatia, Cilicia, and other very near countries, we resolved ought to be firmly maintained, some having doubted concerning it."—Ep. 75. A.D. 256.

These may serve as specimens of early councils summoned for a variety of purposes. As to their number, on referring to tom. i, of the *Sacrosancta Concilia Labbei et Cossartii, Nicolai Coleti*, I have reckoned up not less than fifty in the first three centuries, in different parts of the world, some rather general, others particular, of which the proceedings are given at length in that voluminous work.

No. III.—Page 81.

The fullest account of the proceedings of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1689, which has been yet published, is found, I apprehend, in Calamy's *Abridgment of Baxter's Life and Times, with an Account of the Ministers ejected after the Restoration*, in two vols. The particulars, respecting the Commissioners, in Birch's *Life of Tillotson*, (p. 180, ed. 1752,) are copied from it, and form but a small portion of what is there collected. Calamy tells us of "an exact copy he once had" of the alterations drawn up by the Commissioners, but "lost by lending it out"; and, indeed, it must needs be concluded that there are many *such* private copies in existence to this day, besides the official records. He "picks up what light he can" upon the subject, from the short testimonies of two Bishops, one of whom is Bishop Burnett, (who intimate that the plan,

proposed by the Commission, is to be traced back to Archbishop Sancroft, at the close of the reign of James II.;) and from some brief notices of Nicholls, in his *Apparatus ad def. Eccles. Anglicanæ*, p. 95, 96; but chiefly from a lengthened account given him *by a friend*, "which in the main he has reason to think right, though in some respects defective." Hence the information furnished by Calamy, (not an impartial witness certainly, even if his materials had been unexceptionable,) has, according to his own showing, little or no claim to authenticity. The following statements are taken from such few parts of his narrative (vol. i. p. 447, &c. second edition) as are verified or can be amended by the MSS. documents already alluded to.

The Commission itself, in the second part of its preamble, runs thus:— "Whereas the Book of Canons is fit to be reviewed, and made more suitable to the state of the Church; and, whereas, there are defects and abuses in the ecclesiastical courts and jurisdictions; and, particularly, there is not sufficient provision made for the removing of scandalous ministers, and for the reforming of manners either in ministers or people; and whereas, it is most fit that there should be a strict method prescribed for the examination of such persons as desire to be admitted into holy orders, both as to their learning and manners:— We, therefore, out of our pious and princely care," &c. &c.

What they agreed upon was to be laid before Convocation, that it might first have their sanction, and then that of parliamentary authority. Nothing was to be *determined* by the Commissioners; they were only called to give their opinions; not to prevent the Convocation, but to shorten their work.

THE NAMES OF THE PERSONS APPOINTED TO BE
COMMISSIONERS.

Bishops, Ten.

Lamplugh, Archbishop of York.
Compton, Bishop of London.
Smith, Bishop of Carlisle.
Meaw, Bishop of Winchester.
Floyd, Bishop of St. Asaph.
Sprat, Bishop of Rochester.
Burnett, Bishop of Sarum.
Trelawney, Bishop of Exeter.
Humphreys, Bishop of Bangor.
Stratford, Bishop of Chester.

Deans, Six.

Tillotson, Dean of Canterbury.
Stillingfleet, Dean of St. Paul's.
Patrick, Dean of Peterborough.
Meggot, Dean of Winchester.
Sharp, Dean of Norwich.
Aldridge, Dean of Christchurch.

Professors of the Universities.

<i>Oxford.</i>	<i>Cambridge.</i>
Dr. Hall.	Dr. Beaumont.
Dr. Jane.	Dr. Montague.

Archdeacons.

Dr. Goodman, Archdeacon of Middlesex.
Dr. Beveridge, Archdeacon of Colchester.

Dr. Alston, Archdeacon of Essex.

Dr. Batteley, Archdeacon of Canterbury.

London Clergy, Six.

Dr. Tenison.

Dr. Fowler.

Dr. Grove.

Dr. Kidder.

Dr. Scott,

Dr. Williams.

Six of the Commissioners never sat. The Bishop of Rochester only attended twice. Doctors—Jane, Aldrich, and Meggot, came not after the third session.

1. In the *ritual* part of their task the Commissioners proposed or contemplated the following alterations:—

That the Apocryphal Lessons should be omitted, and others, from the Canonical Scripture, appointed in their stead by a new Calendar, in which such saints' days only should be inserted as were allowed in the first book of Edward VI.

That upon Epiphany-day, and upon the usual and all other saints' days, but not, as now, upon the great festivals, should be recited the Athanasian Creed, the articles of which ought to be received as agreeable to the Holy Scriptures; and the condemning clauses understood as relating only to those who obstinately deny the substance of the Christian faith.

That the word "minister" should be every where substituted in the rubrics for "priest."

That in the ordinary morning service, when there is no Communion, the minister should, immediately after the last prayer but one in the Litany, proceed to the collect,—“Almighty God, unto whom all hearts,” &c. —to the Ten Commandments,—and so on to the Nicene Creed,—and then to the prayer of Chrysostom, and “the Grace of our Lord,” &c.

That it should be submitted to the Convocation

whether a note should not be subjoined to *filioue* in the Nicene Creed, conciliatory with respect to the Greek Church, and in order to our maintaining catholic communion.

That the meaning and usefulness of the sign of the cross in Baptism should be distinctly set forth in a rubric for the purpose; but if there were any who should notwithstanding duly declare to the minister, that they were persuaded in their consciences that they could not without sin admit the sign of the cross in their child's baptism, then it should be *left* for farther consideration whether it should not be omitted;—and if any minister at his institution should declare his conscientious objections to the use of that sign, the Bishop should name a curate to officiate for him in that particular.

That the surplice should be declared to be adopted because it is a decent and ancient custom; but if any minister should think it unlawful, he should apply to the Bishop, who might appoint another to officiate for him in the prayers, or not, as he should judge best.

That the utility and antiquity of the custom of god-fathers and godmothers should be declared and commended; but if any should persist, after expostulation on some previous day, in desiring that his child might be baptized without them, then the child should be capable of being baptized on the suretyship of the parents only, or of some other near relation.

That if any should duly come to the minister of the parish, in the week before the Communion, and declare that they are persuaded that they cannot receive the Communion kneeling without sin, then the minister, in the event of his reasoning with them in vain, should give them the sacred elements in some convenient place or pew, without obliging them to kneel.

That it might be considered whether the names of candidates should be published some days *before* ordination, and notice given to the parish, to which they should severally expect to be appointed.

That it should be *submitted*; 1, whether clergymen of the Church of Rome, who have often come with only pretended Orders, should not be admitted to serve as deacons or presbyters in the Church of England, by a *conditional* ordination, according to a special office, introducing into the proper places the terms—"If thou be not already ordained;" 2, whether candidates from the Reformed Churches abroad should not be received simply by imposition of a Bishop's hand, to officiate as presbyters in the Church of England, their previous ordination being declared sufficient, though imperfect.

That the Church, being desirous of doing all that can be done for peace, should receive such as have been ordained in this kingdom by Presbyters only, to be ordained *conditionally*, as explained above, according to a special office for that purpose;—it being expressly provided that it should *only* be granted to such as should have been ordained previous to the time then present. The precedent for such conditional ordination was shown to have been furnished by Archbishop Bramhall in Ireland, who on the return of Charles II, ordained some ministers, (they were, I apprehend, Scotch Presbyterians *only*,) in this manner; and some of the words in his Letters of Orders were recommended to be adopted by our Bishops in theirs.*

* *Non annihilantes priores ordines, si quos habuit, nec validitatem, nec invaliditatem eorumdem determinantes, . . . sed solummodo suppletes quicquid prius defuit per canones Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ requisitum, et providentes paci Ecclesiæ ut schismatis tollatur occasio, et conscientius fidelium satisfiat, nec ullo modo dubitent de ejus ordinatione, aut actus suos presbyteriales tanquam invalidos aversentur.*

2. The principal alterations contemplated in the *prayers and services themselves*—principal, I mean as to length and importance,—seem to have been in the Litany and the Collects, as follows :—

That in the Litany, there should be added in the first part several new deprecations, and in the second part several new petitions ;—the Invocation of the persons of the Trinity being retained, and but few verbal corrections being any where attempted, one of which is—“ dying suddenly and unprepared”—for “ sudden death.”

That in order to adapt the Collects to the Epistles and Gospels, many of the collects, especially of those after Trinity, should be considerably changed, and for others there should be substituted new ones, generally of *greater* length ; but most of those for which new ones were substituted, should be preserved among the occasional prayers at the end of the Communion Service.—This department of labour was chiefly allotted to Patrick, who was made Bishop of Chichester soon after the opening of the Commission.

That in the Morning and Evening Prayer—in the *Te Deum*, we should read, “ The Father of an infinite majesty ; thy true and only begotten Son ;” the *Benedictus* should be omitted ; another prayer substituted for “ Lighten our darkness,” &c. ; in the prayer for the Clergy, “ Who alone workest great marvels,” should be changed to “ Who alone art the giver of all spiritual gifts ;” and the occasional prayer—“ O God, whose nature and property,” &c.—should be left out, as not being in the original book, with a query, whether in some of the copies it is not found in another place ; and that not only in the morning and evening services, but elsewhere, in prayers for the King, instead of *apparent*

petitions "against his 'enemies," there should be used some such phrases as—"bless all his righteous undertakings;" and all high titles of the King and Queen should be omitted.

That in the Communion Service only some few verbal alterations should be made; the consecration of fresh elements, when needed, should be with prayer, instead of "Our Saviour Christ, in the same night," &c.; and a new prayer should be provided to be used in the week preceding the Communion, with a view to preparation for it.

That in the Services for Baptism and Confirmation, only a few corrections, and those chiefly verbal, are requisite; that the expressions respecting regeneration should remain with scarcely any exception, as they now are; that pouring, or sprinkling, as well as dipping, should be allowed; the Order for Confirmation should commence with an exhortation, immediately addressed to the candidates, chiefly in the words of the present declaration; and after the answer "I do," in the Confirmation Service, another question be introduced—"Do you renounce," &c., as in the service for Baptism.

That in the Catechism, some of the longer answers should be subsequently broken into short questions and answers; and for "The body and blood of Christ which are verily and indeed taken," &c., there should be substituted—"The benefits of the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, which are verily and indeed taken," &c.

That in the Marriage Service, the words, "With my body I thee worship;" and in the opening exhortation, the words, "To satisfy mere carnal lusts," &c., should be left out.

That in the Visitation of the Sick, the absolution should be in this form—"Our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

... [as at present] ... and upon thy true faith and repentance, by his authority committed to me, I pronounce thee absolved," &c.

That in the Burial Service no other material change should be introduced than for—"take unto himself the soul of our dear brother," to read—"take out of this world the soul of our brother;" and in the last prayer but one, instead of the words—"deliver this our brother out of the miseries, &c. ... shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, &c. ... of thy holy name," to insert a new petition closing with the last sentence of the prayer, as it now stands.

That at the commencement of the Communion Service, instead of the reference to discipline, and the recital of the curses, the design of genuine fasting should be explained, (as tending to work in us true repentance which is a real change of heart and life,) the beatitudes recited, and then denunciations added from several texts of St. Paul, after which the exhortation—"Now seeing that all they are accursed," &c., with a short introductory paragraph respecting blessings,—should succeed as at present.

That in the Ordination services, no very material changes should take place, but merely such as follow; the first question, addressed to Deacons, to stand thus—"Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, having a sincere and fervent desire to take upon you," &c.; in the Ordering of Priests and Consecration of Bishops, the hymn, *Veni Creator*, to be omitted, and new hymns composed instead of it; and the Convocation should decide whether the form of committal—"Receive ye the Holy Ghost," &c., should not be turned into a prayer.

Dr. Kidder, made Dean of Peterborough soon after the commencement of the Commission, drew up in writing observations on the version of the Psalms in

the book of Common Prayer, but it was left undecided whether to keep that version as it is, or to revise it, or to adopt the bible-translation in its room.

On the preceding statement I may venture to make the following remarks, chiefly for the purpose of showing that the Revision of 1689 is not proper to be adopted or imitated by us at this present time. I mean even the *real* Revision; which stands altogether opposed, in its maintenance of sound doctrine, to Dr. Samuel Clarke's amendments of the Liturgy, or rather desecrations, (a copy of which I have seen, taken from his own MS.,) and would be a much safer model than what was mainly borrowed from Calamy, without any idea of his errors, the alteration of the Common Prayer by the American Episcopal Church.* Clarke's ruthless hand scarcely leaves any where a single vestige of any of our doxologies, or any other characteristic formulæ, which contains the shadow of a faithful testimony to the proper deity of the Saviour! Calamy's anonymous friend reports many things incorrectly, and often to the disadvantage of the Commissioners. I think I am warranted to allege that almost half (for I have counted them over) of the particulars which he has specified are without foundation:—such as the laying aside of cathedral chaunting; the selecting a new course of psalms for Sundays; the change of the rubric about daily Common Prayer; the reading of the Absolution by a Deacon; the putting out of the word “remission,” as “not very intelligible;” the frequent omission of *gloria patri*; the exclusion of *Benedicite*, of *Nunc-dimittis*, and of the response in the versicles after the Lord's Prayer—“Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O

* See the Preface to their first edition, where they quote from Nicholls and “other *certain* accounts,” not knowing, it should seem, that they were Calamy's, and very uncertain.

God,"—(as if "grounded on the predestinating doctrine;")—and the description of the prayer, "O God, whose nature, and property," &c., as "full of strange and impertinent expressions." His account also of the declaration concerning the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian Creed, as if intended against those only that deny the substance of the Christian religion *in general*, conveys an inaccurate impression, injurious to the Commissioners.

But with regard to the *real* Revision—

1. Many of the alterations which it contemplated, are, I should apprehend, either immaterial, or have gone too far. I humbly conceive many of those in the *Litany* and the *Collects* are instances of the former; the Rubrics respecting the *Athanasian Creed*, *Sponsors*, the sign of the *Cross*, and *Ordination*, of the latter. The obliquity and inadmissibleness of any such concession to rationalism, as lowering the tone of the Athanasian Creed, have been already argued. And is not the Rubric about sponsors better as it stands, allowing the *possible* interpretation, in extreme cases, that godfathers may comprehend the natural father, with an understanding that the minister should do what in him lies by persuasion and instruction to prevail upon parents, the natural sponsors, to bring others who will be sponsors also by voluntary engagement? Is not the careful explication of what we scripturally mean by the use of the cross, to go as far as enlightened reverence for Christian antiquity, and zealous remembrance of a *crucified* Redeemer, will allow? Again; were the Commissioners aware of the licence given, by the Savoy Congregational Declaration of faith, to *stated self-appointed lay preaching*, and of the opinion there held about ministers, as sufficiently ordained *without imposition of the hands even of presbyters*? If they were, would they have admitted any persons, pro-

fessing themselves Dissenting ministers, *hypothetically* to episcopal ordination; when, besides the imperfection, or questionable validity of their previous ordination, and the generally insufficient evidence of the *fact*, it was in many instances almost certain they had never received, nor even professed to have received, imposition of hands, or indeed any ordination at all? The actual laxity of the modern Congregational Declaration is even greater than that of the ancient; the former says expressly, a minority of their churches do not use imposition of hands; the latter only intimates that it is not absolutely essential. (See Appendix, No. IV.) And, surely, even in the case of the doubtful *evidence* of the fact of ordinations by the Church of Rome, and in the case of the *imperfect* orders in the foreign churches reordination is allowable, and, if allowable, is the safer and more upright course.

Other additions and alterations, chiefly verbal, made by the Commissioners, may very probably be real improvements—not affecting, however, one particle of doctrinal truth. But if the known conventional limitations and explanations of words be taken into the account, and if clergymen would take proper opportunities of expounding their meaning, what serious inconvenience would arise from continuing these services in their present state? On the other hand, even if the ostensible improvements should be adopted, such is the imperfection of language, that the same fair interpretations of words, and the same ministerial explanations, must still in a measure be summoned to our aid. Besides, the evil of vacillation in standards of devotion, no less—nay in some respects much more—than in standards of doctrine, far outweighs the inconvenience of some flaws, or defects in words and sentences; and to admit the former in order to avoid the latter, would be like meddling frequently with the national weights and measures on account of some slight inaccuracies.

2. It has been intimated, that the Commissioners, collectively considered, though orthodox, were low in their views of doctrine; and in this respect their proceedings are no pattern for us to copy. This deficiency seems to betray itself in their half dismantling our only stronghold against the most subtle kind of heresies, in their excluding generally from the many altered, as well as the new, collects, testimonies to man's lost estate, and redemption by mere grace, and in their cancelling other formularies, where man is described as, of himself, lying in "darkness and the shadow of death,—as "tied and bound with the chain of his sins,"—as dependent on the Holy Ghost, for "perpetual light to cure the dulness of his blinded sight."

3. Nevertheless, their adherence to the substance of the Scripture doctrines,—the Fall of man, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and the like,—and to the integral form of the Liturgy, as we now have it,—ought in all reason to damp the ardour of those at the present day, who, sacrificing truth to a spurious charity, are for paring away the verbal discriminations of the mysteries of the Gospel, and who call loudly for omissions of the Lord's Prayer, as if its frequent use must needs be as vain as the beadrolls of popery; and for the shortening of our service, as if thousands of spiritual worshippers had not for centuries been wafted by it notwithstanding its prolixity—nay rather by the holy enjoyment of its length—to heaven. With these considerations should be connected the remarkable facts, that the Liturgy, *as it now stands*, was translated into Chinese by the late illustrious, Independent minister, Dr. Morrison, as the best calculated of any thing he knew for guiding the devotions of Chinese converts; and still more recently, has been translated into the language of New Zealand by the clergymen engaged under the Church Missionary Society, in evangelizing that most barbarous of all popu-

lations; and, as I have heard one of those devoted clergymen assert in public, has been peculiarly blessed there, along with translations of portions of the Bible, to the hopeful conversion, as well as subsequent edification of many once ferocious cannibals.

4. Another particular, in which the Commissioners do not appear to hold up a model to us, is this. It is to be feared, from a review of their proceedings, that their leaders were too much influenced by the political bias of the day, and were rather anxious, at all events, by certain external changes in the ritual of the Church, to bring about a comprehension of Dissenters, than by improving her internal discipline and practical piety, to hold up the highest and safest, and indeed the only effectual, inducements for so desirable an end.

5. One can scarcely suppose that such eminent men as Burnett, Stillingfleet, Patrick, Tillotson, and Beveridge, were not familiar with the ancient Liturgies. Yet it does not appear that they had the Liturgies of St. James, (so termed,) Basil, and Chrysostom, &c., though they had non-conformists books in great numbers,* before them. The value of these ancient Liturgies may be slightly seen in Bishop Andrews's little volume of *Preces Privatæ*, said to have been found wet with his tears immediately after his death. This omission, if it be such, is another point in which, I conceive, the Commissioners should not be imitated, supposing, what we have endeavoured to controvert, that they ought to be imitated by us at all at the present day.

No. IV. Page 92.

It is a serious charge for any one to bring against the Congregational Body, that they have declined from sound doctrine. With unfeigned sorrow I feel compelled to

* So says Bishop Burnett, in a Charge quoted by Calamy, p. 449.

maintain it, knowing that if it be well founded, some important practical lessons of duty, some influential results in Church polity, may be deducible from the fact. The charge is this,—that whereas in the ancient “Declaration of faith and order,” published by the Congregational Churches at the Savoy, sound scriptural doctrines are set forth, in the “Principles of faith and church order, agreed to by the general meeting of the Congregational Union in May, 1833,” there are marks of aberration from those doctrines of their fathers. We have, therefore, only to compare these two documents; to me it appears, that the plain process of juxtaposition proves the point. The reader will judge. This is the more remarkable, because in the very same general meeting which issued deteriorated statements of doctrine, the Congregational Union professes to act “in agreement with their ancient testimonies and confessions;” (p. 42;) and in the Congregational Magazine for June, (if I mistake not,) 1832, p. 442, it is said, “Had not the Declaration of our fathers, at a meeting held at the Savoy, in the year 1658, become scarce and almost obsolete, that might have been referred to, as affording a view of our sentiments; but considering that Declaration, though most orthodox as to words, as too much extended for our purpose, we are glad to receive the summary before us [the *previous draught* read at the Congregational Union in May 1832] as much more compendious, and more applicable to the present period.” The question was partly what suits the taste of the *present* period.

FIRST DOCUMENT.

“A Declaration of the faith and order, owned and practised in the congregational churches in England, agreed upon and consented to by their elders and mes-

sengers in their meeting at the Savoy, Oct. 12th, 1658.
Ed. London, 1729."*

CHAP. II. p. 10.—“*Of God and of the Holy Trinity.*

“There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, &c.”

* * *

“3. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost is eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. Which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependance upon Him.”

CHAP. VIII. p. 24. “*Of Christ the Mediator.*

* * *

“2. The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties, and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin, being conceived, by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance: so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion; which

* These elders themselves tell us, in “drawing up this Confession, they had before them the Articles of Religion, approved and passed by both Houses of Parliament, A. D. 1648,”—commonly called the Westminster Confession;—“to which, for the substance of it, they fully assent, as do their brethren of New England, and the Churches also of Scotland.”—They do not differ materially from it, except in matters of discipline and Church-government.

person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man."

* * *

"4. This office the Lord Jesus most willingly undertook, which, that he might discharge, he was made under the law, and perfectly fulfilled it, and underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have borne and suffered, being made sin and a curse for us, enduring most grievous torments immediately from God in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body, was crucified and died, was buried and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption. On the third day he arose from the dead with the same body in which he suffered, with which also he ascended into heaven, and there sits at the right hand of his Father, making intercession, and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world."

* * *

"7. Christ, in the work of mediation, acts according to both natures, each nature doing that which is proper to itself; yet by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes, in Scripture, attributed to the person denominated by the other."

CHAP. XI.—*Of Justification.*

"Those whom God effectually calls, he also freely justifies, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous, not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone."

"2. Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ, and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification: yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but words by love."

CHAP. XXIV.—p. 63. “*Of the Civil Magistrate.*”

“God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, has ordained civil magistrates to be under him over the people, for his own glory and the public good; and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword for the defence and encouragement of them that do good, and for the punishment of evil-doers.”

* * *

“3. Although the magistrate is bound to encourage, promote, and protect the professors and profession of the gospel, and to manage and order civil administrations in a due subserviency to the interest of Christ in the world, and to that end to take care that men of corrupt minds and conversations do not licentiously publish and divulge blasphemies and errors, in their own nature subverting the faith, and inevitably destroying the souls of them that receive them; yet in such differences about the doctrines of the gospel, or ways of the worship of God as may befall men exercising a good conscience, manifesting it in their conversation, and holding the foundation, not disturbing others in their ways or worship that differ from them, there is no warrant for the magistrate under the gospel to abridge them of their liberty.”

CHAP. XXVI. p. 67.—“*Of the Church.*”

“2. The whole body of men throughout the world professing the faith of the gospel, and obedience to God by Christ according to it, not destroying their own profession by any errors everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, are and may be called the visible Catholic Church of Christ, though as such it is not intrusted with the administration of any ordinances; nor has it any offices to rule or govern in, or over the whole body.”

“Of the Institution of Churches, and the order appointed in them by Jesus Christ.

* * *

“3. Those thus called (through the ministry of the word by his Spirit) he commands to walk together in particular societies or churches for their mutual edification, and the due performance of that public worship, which he requires of them in this world.”

“4. To each of these churches thus gathered, according to his mind declared in his Word, he has given all that power and authority which is any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he has instituted for them to observe, with commands and rules for the due and right exerting and executing of that power.”

* * *

“9. The officers appointed by Christ to be chose and set apart by the Church so called, and gathered for the peculiar administration of ordinances, and execution of power or duty, which he entrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are Pastors, Teachers, Elders, and Deacons.”

* * *

“11. The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person fitted, and gifted by the Holy Ghost, to the office of Pastor, Teacher, or Elder in a Church, is that he be chose thereto by the common suffrage of the Church itself, and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands of the eldership of that Church, if there be any before constituted therein; and to a Deacon, that he be chose by the like suffrage, and set apart by prayer and the like imposition of hands.”

* * *

“13. . . . the work of preaching the word is not so entirely confined to them, [Pastors and Teachers,] but that others also gifted and fitted by the Holy Ghost and

approved, being by lawful ways and means in the providence of God called thereto, may publicly, ordinarily, and constantly perform it, so that they give themselves up thereto."*

SECOND DOCUMENT.

"Principles of Religion and Principles of Church order and discipline," unanimously adopted by "the third General Meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, held at the Congregational Library, London, May 7th, 8th, 10th, 1833;" copied from the printed minutes of the said Meeting.

"DECLARATION. (p. 32.)

"The Congregational Churches in England and Wales, frequently called Independent, hold the following doctrines as of Divine authority, and as the foundation of Christian faith and practice."

"PRELIMINARY NOTES.

"It is not intended that the following statement should be put forth with any authority, or as a standard to which assent should be required."

"5. It is not intended to present a scholastic or critical confession of faith, but merely such a statement as any individual member of the body might offer, as containing its leading principles."

* * *

"5. Disallowing the utility of Creeds and Articles of Religion, as a bond of union, and protesting against subscription to any human formularies, as a term of communion, congregationalists are yet willing to declare,

* The Presbyterians and Independents, in 1690, united in adopting certain heads of agreement, the Eighth Article of which runs thus:—"We esteem it sufficient that a Church acknowledge the Scriptures to be the Word of God, the perfect and only rule of faith

for general information, what is commonly believed among them, reserving to every one the most perfect liberty of conscience."

"PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION. (p. 33—36.)

* * *

"2. They believe in one God essentially holy, wise, just, and good, eternal, infinite, immutable in all natural and moral perfections; the Creator, Supporter, and Governor of all beings and of all things."

"3. They believe that God is revealed in the Scriptures as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that to each are attributed the same Divine properties and perfections. The doctrine of the Divine existence, as above stated, they cordially believe without attempting fully to explain."

* * *

"9. They believe that in the fulness of the time the Son of God was manifested in the flesh, being born of the Virgin Mary, but conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost; and that our Lord Jesus Christ was both the Son of Man and the Son of God, partaking fully and truly of human nature, though without sin, equal with the Father, and 'the express image of his person.'"

"10. They believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, revealed, either personally in his own ministry, or by the Holy Spirit in the ministry of his Apostles, the whole mind of God for our salvation; and that by his obedi-

and practice; and own either the doctrinal part of those commonly called the Articles of the Church of England, or the Confession or Catechisms, shorter or longer, compiled by the Assembly at Westminster, or the Confession agreed on at the Savoy, to be agreeable to the said rule."—See Calamy's *Abridgment*, &c., vol. i. p. 482.—The original New England States in North America generally adopted this Article almost, if I mistake not, word for word, as may be seen in Dwight's *Travels* in America.

ence to the Divine law while he lived, and by his sufferings unto death, he meritoriously 'obtained eternal redemption for us,' having thereby vindicated and illustrated Divine justice, 'magnified the law,' and 'brought in everlasting salvation.' "

* * *

" 13. They believe that they are justified through faith in Christ as the 'Lord our righteousness,' and 'not by works of the law.' "

* * *

" PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH ORDER AND DIS-
CIPLINE. (p. 36.)

* * *

" 2. They believe that the New Testament contains, either in the form of express statute, or in the example and practice of Apostles and apostolic Churches, all the articles of faith necessary to be believed, and all the principles of order and discipline requisite for constituting and governing Christian societies, and that human traditions, fathers, and councils, canons and creeds, possess no authority over the faith and practice of Christians."

* * *

" 4. They believe that the New Testament authorizes every Christian church to elect its own officers, to manage all its affairs, and to stand independent of, and irresponsible to, all authority, saving that only of the Supreme and Divine Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ."

* * *

" 12. They believe that church officers, whether Bishops or Deacons, should be chosen by the free voice of the Church, but that their dedication to the duties of the office should take place with special prayer, and by solemn designation ; to which most of the Churches add the imposition of hands by those already in office."

Amongst the motions passed unanimously at the Meeting, the following passages occur:—

P. 39. "That as the union is bound to fraternize with all denominations of Christians, holding the faith of Christ in purity, and also avowing their belief in the unlawfulness of using the secular power in the kingdom of Christ," &c.

P. 41. "That it is deeply to be lamented that any persons professing Christianity should at any period, either in ancient or modern times, have resorted to the unlawful expedient of soliciting the interposition of the secular power for the maintenance of Christian doctrine or discipline, or for the establishment and support of the Christian worship and ministry."

"That it is incumbent on all who value the honour and glory of the 'Lord our lawgiver, king, and judge,' to deny and protest against this interference with the sole and supreme authority of Christ in his Church."

P. 42. "That in agreement with their ancient testimonies and confessions, it is especially the duty of the congregational body, while appealing to their uniform loyalty and patriotism, openly to protest with meekness, but at the same time with firmness and unanimity, against this aberration from the purity of the gospel church."

P. 42. Among their alleged grievances they reckon,—
 "The sums which they are required to pay direct or indirect, in the shape of Easter-dues, mortuary fees, church rates, and surplice fees, the assessment of their chapels to the church rates and tithes, as now appropriated and collected, &c. towards the maintenance of a splendid establishment, whose very existence, as such, they esteem an encroachment on the authority and prerogative of their Lord and Saviour; so that while by their principles and profession, they voluntarily maintain their own worship and ministry, they are compelled by

law to pay equally with those who approve of the established form."

Among the Members of the Committee are the names of J. Bennett, D. D., H. F. Burder, D. D., J. Burnet, J. Clayton, M. A., J. Fletcher, D. D.

It is but justice to observe that the minutes of the General Meeting in May, 1834, are free from all such criminations of Church Establishments. As a Churchman and as a Christian, I rejoice at it. I would not go about to surmise what sinister or inferior motives may have led to so altered a tone. No, let us hail it at once as a return to a milder spirit, and better becoming the gospel of Christ; and let it be taken into the estimate of Christian charity, together with some recent protests against violence, by distinguished Dissenters, as an earnest that in future there will be less angry feeling among Dissenters, and I will add among Churchmen too; less on all sides of strife and vain glory, and more of the mind of Christ.

On collating the two documents I would beg to make these remarks:—

1st. The document of the Congregational Union is styled, "*Principles of Faith and Church Order.*" Now a *principle* of faith amounts to no distinct article or statement of faith; it is but something elementary, on which that statement is to be founded. The *principles* of a watch are the properties of the main-spring and the balance-wheel; they are not the watch itself, nor the metal of the spring or balance, nor any part of its *materiel*. On the contrary, the ancient symbol of the Congregationalists is at once flatly asserted to be a "*Declaration of Faith.*" The former makes, indeed, a "declaration" but merely introductory, to apologize for grazing so closely, as they do, on an imitation of creeds! The Congregational Union at their General

Meeting, May 1834, without any particular resolution for the purpose, slid into a substitution of the more definitive term, "Declaration," instead of "Principles;" and also into some very strong measures, very like *imposing* those principles, viz. "affixing them, in one broad sheet, to the walls of vestries, school-rooms, cottage-preaching stations."—(See their Minutes for 1834, to be had at the Congregational Library, p. 4.)

2. In defining the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, the modern document seems studiously to omit the word *person*. This is, I fear, the more popular course, and argues an underground influence of Socinianism, or more properly (as Dr. Hales, of Killesandra, calls it) Sabellian-Unitarianism, or at least Rationalism. Even the learned Professor Moses Stuart, in his first *Excursus*, in his commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews,* is more than half inclined to drop the *word*. But without the use, surely, of the scriptural ideas expressed, however inadequately, by the *word* Person, the definitions of the Trinity and the Incarnation, as propounded by the Congregational body, would not easily preclude the assent of some Socinians; who would find no greater difficulty in hitting upon some sleight of words to accommodate it to their heresy, than in explaining away the "Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" in baptism. Even the Congregational Union, when referring, in their 9th article of faith, to the *person* of the Father, and no where else to any other *person* in the Godhead, verge upon Arian,

* Vol. ii. p. 372.—There is the same dangerous shyness of the word Person, probably owing to the characteristic speculations of his system, in that excellent *Essay on the Habitual Exercise of Love to God*, by John Joseph Gurney, the stay of the Society of Friends, in this sifting-time of their communion.

or Sabellian statements, confusing the three Persons into one. It is a curious fact that the draught first submitted to the Union, in 1832, contains express testimony to "the three Divine Persons" in one God, and, in so many words, to "a Trinity in unity."—(Congregational Magazine, for 1832, p. 442.) Certain it is, that the obnoxious word, *Person*, though excluded from the Principles now set forth, is rigidly adhered to by the ancient Declaration.

Nor does it matter whether *person*, or *subsistence*, be adopted. For how are each of these terms to be defined? *Person*, I conceive, is an *individually subsisting intelligent agent*; and *subsistence*, or *hypostasis*, (as applied to the scriptural views of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, respectively) means *that which subsists, so as to have individuality, intelligence, and activity*. What then is the difference between these two terms? Complaisance to deadly error seems to be the order of the day; and, with this fact before our eyes, to relinquish the word in question, what is it else in effect, but a compromise of truth, and, withal, a surrender of one of the safeguards, at the very time that the sapping process is hastening on against the citadel?

3. The modern Declaration claims for each of their Churches, or congregations, power to "stand independent of, and irresponsible to all authority, saving that only of the Supreme and Divine Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ;" and is accompanied with repeated and unqualified protests, by the Congregational Union, "against the interposition of the secular power, for the maintenance of Christian doctrines, or discipline, or for the establishment, and support of the Christian worship or ministry." On the contrary, the ancient Declaration asserts, that "the magistrate is bound to encourage, promote, and protect the professors, and

professions of the Gospel, and to manage and order civil administrations in a due subserviency to the interest of Christ."

4. The present Congregational body (professing, in their first article, to receive the Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament as divinely inspired, no less than the New), disparages the Old Testament, as if it afforded no guidance at all respecting the government of God's Church in all ages, and repeatedly appeals, under the head of "Church order and discipline," to the New Testament *alone*, as furnishing "*all* the principles of order and discipline," for Christian societies. Their forefathers appeal, without making any such dangerous distinction, to the whole Bible, not only by their general recognition of its inspiration as their first article of faith, but by affirming, when they treat of Church order, that every Church, or particular society of Christians, is "gathered by Christ, through the ministry of THE WORD, (not of the New Testament alone,) by the Spirit," "according to his mind declared in his WORD," not in the New Testament alone. The Church officers are now "*bishops* and *deacons*;" anciently they were "*pastors*, (teachers, elders,) and *deacons*." Nor is there any instance that I am aware of, in which the Congregational body of the present day have improved upon their ancestors, except in avoiding that full licence for lay preachers, which the fathers of their Church admitted into their system.

If now the charge of declension be in any degree made good, it is with no other feelings than sorrow and regret that we survey our own conclusion. Happy shall we be if any Congregationalists be led to reconsider, and to do what in them lies, to restore the recent Declaration of their faith and worship, more nearly to the

standard of their fathers; and if Churchmen be furnished with fresh arguments for watching against the philosophizing religion of the times, for adhering to the duly-moderated use of Creeds, and for blessing God, that whilst other Protestants have (we grieve to see it) lowered their confessions, no breaches have been yet made, ever since the Reformation, in the standards of the Church of England.

It is earnestly submitted to the serious consideration of sober-minded, intelligent, and devout Dissenters, whether the unqualified manner in which perfect freedom from *all* disabilities, and perfect equality in *all* respects with the Established Church, is often demanded, and demanded with vehemence too, not only by ill-informed agitators, but by many distinguished men among Dissenters, be not at variance with the professions of loyalty which their Communions have often made? For must not those contenders for perfect equality necessarily, on their principles, maintain the absolute injustice of requiring the Monarch of these realms to be a member of the Established Church? When they so pointedly insist upon perfect equality as their inviolable right, do they not in effect insist upon it, as far as in them lies, that no such *high* preference should be shown to that Church; but that any heir apparent, who might choose to become an Independent, or a Baptist, or even a Socinian,—and why not a Deist?—would be still as fully entitled to the Civil Supremacy, which is all that Dissenters recognize, as if he had remained in communion with the Church of England? Do they not in effect strike a side-blow at the Protestant Monarchy of these realms, as by law established? Do they know what they say, and whereof they affirm? Are they aware that they must either renounce their *principle*, or that this is its legitimate unavoidable inference?

No. V. (*Page 101.*)

For the purpose of elucidating the remarks upon the Oath of Supremacy in chapter vii. it seems important to bring together here in one point of view the different forms, into which that Oath has been moulded at different periods of our history from Henry VIII. to George IV.

The Oath against the Authority of the Bishop of Rome,
&c. 35 Hen. 8, c. 11.

“ I, A. B., having now the Veil of Darkness of the usurped Power, Authority, and Jurisdiction of the See and Bishops of Rome, clearly taken away from mine eyes, do utterly testify and declare in my conscience, That neither the See nor the Bishop of Rome, nor any foreign Potestate, hath, nor ought to have any Jurisdiction, Power, or Authority within this Realm, neither by God’s Law, nor by any other just Law or Means. (2.) And though by sufferance and abuse in times passed, they aforesaid have usurped and vindicated a feigned and an unlawful Power and Jurisdiction within this Realm, which hath been supported till few years passed; therefore, because it might be deemed and thought thereby, that I took or take it for just and good, I therefore now do clearly and frankly renounce, refuse, relinquish, and forsake that pretended Authority, Power, and Jurisdiction both of the See and Bishop of Rome, and of all other foreign Powers. (3.) And that I shall never consent nor agree that the foresaid See or Bishop of Rome, or any of their Successors, shall practise, exercise, or have any manner of Authority, Jurisdiction, or Power within this Realm, or any other the King’s Realms or Dominions, nor any foreign Potestate, of what estate, degree, or condition soever he be, but

that I shall resist the same at all times to the uttermost of my Power: So help me God, all Saints, and the Holy Evangelists."

The Oath of the Queen's Supremacy, as enacted in
1 Eliz. 1, c. 20.

"I, A. B., do utterly testify, and declare in my conscience, That the Queen's Highness is the only supreme Governor of this Realm, and of all other her Highness's Dominions, and Countries, as well in all Spiritual as Ecclesiastical things or causes as Temporal; and that no foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State or Potentate hath, or ought to have any Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, Pre-eminence or Authority, Ecclesiastical or Spiritual, within this realm: and therefore I do utterly renounce and forsake all foreign Jurisdications, Powers, Superiorities and Authorities, and do promise, that from henceforth I shall bear faith and true allegiance to the Queen's Highness, her Heirs and Lawful Successors, and to my power shall assist and defend all Jurisdications, Privileges, Pre-eminences and Authorities granted, or belonging to the Queen's Highness, her Heirs and Successors, or united and annexed to the Imperial Crown of this realm. So help me God, &c., by the contents of this book.

The Oath as amended in the 1 William and Mary.

"I, A. B., do swear, That I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as Impious and Heretical, that damnable doctrine and position, That Princes excommunicated, or deprived by the Pope or any authority of the See of Rome may be deposed, or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever.

And I do declare, That no foreign Prince, Person,

Prelate, State or Potentate hath, or ought to have, any Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, Pre-eminence or Authority, Ecclesiastical or Spiritual, within this realm.

“ So help me God.”

The Oath, of 1 William and Mary is still taken by Protestants as in the Ordination Service of the Church of England.

Extract from the Oath of Supremacy, appointed by the Act of Parliament, A. D. 1829, commonly called the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, to be taken by Roman Catholics.

“ And I do further declare, That it is not an article of my faith, and that I do renounce, reject, and abjure the opinion that Princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, or any Authority of the See of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or by any person whatsoever. And I do declare, that I do not believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign Prince, Prelate, Person, State, or Potentate, hath, or ought to have, any temporal or civil Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, or Pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, within this realm. So help me God.”

The true constitutional doctrine of the Royal Supremacy is laid down, as we have already observed, in the 37th article of our Church; where it is expressly declared, that “ we give not to our Princes the ministering either of God’s Word or of the Sacraments, the which thing the Injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify.” The passage in those Injunctions is here subjoined. After an account of previous particulars, there “followed (says Burnett) an

explanation of the oath of Supremacy, in which the Queen declared that she did not pretend to any authority for the ministering of divine Service in the Church, and that all that she challenged was that which had at all times belonged to the imperial Crown of England; that she had the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons under God, so that no foreign power had any rule over them; and if those who had formerly appeared to have scruples about it, took it in that sense, she was well pleased to accept it, and did acquit them of all penalties in the Act.”—(Hist. of the Reformation, vol. ii. p. 368. Folio, 1715.)

The reader’s particular attention should be directed to the original expressions in 35 Hen. 8, “neither hath, nor ought to have, *neither by God’s law, nor by any other just law or means:*” and likewise to the retention of the word *authority*, in the Protestant’s oath, whilst it is stricken out of that which is taken by Roman Catholics.

That an individual of no account should think of reconciling difficulties respecting the Protestant and Roman Catholic oaths, which have baffled the powers of many generations, would be very ridiculous, even in this day of loud boasting against the wisdom of our ancestors. But a child’s questions may suggest a useful hint: and in this hope the author might be allowed to say to those who are fathers and masters in studies of this sort,—“If the sentiments, pleaded for above, be just, ought there not to be grounded on them, (and in that case what *ought* to be, we would trust in our country’s character for truth and justice, *will* be,) *some such* amendment of the Oath of Supremacy, as follows?”—

“No *foreign* Prince, Person, Prelate, State, or Potentate hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, superiority, pre-eminence, or, OVER ALL PERSONS UNIVERSAL

AND TO ALL BUT GOD IRRESPONSIBLE, power or authority, regarding matters ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm:—and no Individual, or Body of men, among the *subjects* of the United Kingdom of Great Britain hath, or ought to have, over his, or their own proceedings, THE ABSOLUTELY UNIVERSAL, AND ABSOLUTELY TO ALL BUT GOD IRRESPONSIBLE, power and authority, regarding matters ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm:—so help me God.”

The two clauses, taken together, would seem to secure the essential prerogative of the King, and at the same time to testify fully against the usurpations by the Roman Catholic Church of spiritual powers contrary to Scripture and ruinous to society. The first clause is opposed to the *foreign* absolute spiritual claims of the Pope; the second, against the similarly absolute *domestic* claims, in spiritual things, of any one deputed by the Pope, or of any body of men acknowledging the Pope, or of any other person or body. If individual Protestants, here and there, do hold the antichristian, antisocial tenets, adverted to in the second clause, is it not necessary and right before God and man, is it not the very thing to be aimed at, that they should be left under the disabling and inhibitory operation of the oath? The additional words in the first clause might be used *salvâ conscientiâ*, by all Protestants of course, and by such Roman Catholics (the generality probably of educated laymen, and many of the titular hierarchy and priesthood), as qualify the claims of the Church and Bishop of Rome*

* Their claims are thus stated in the Creed of Pope Pius IV, which must be assented to by all candidates for bishoprics, benefices, parochial cures, ministries in the regular orders, and offices of all kinds, under the See or Court of Rome, as well as by all

with limitations like those of the Cisalpine doctors. The second clause also, the whole of which is additional, might be safely adopted by Protestants, and by Roman Catholics of the moderated views just mentioned.

It would seem also to be a peculiar recommendation of the suggested amendment, that it would provide one oath for Roman Catholics and Protestants, and so put an end to the political anomaly and invidiousness of two different, nay somewhat jarring, appeals, made by two large classes respectively of the same community on the same occasions to Almighty God.

N.B. It should be particularly noticed, that the whole of this treatise was prepared for the press, and, except the Appendix and the Preface, almost printed off before the late political changes. Its progress has been delayed since by hinderances of a private nature. The author has only just heard, that *the Established Church Society*, having extensively circulated some forcible printed appeals, has elicited for the most part

heretics (so called) on their recantation and admission into that Church:—"I acknowledge the holy catholic and apostolic Roman Church, THE MOTHER AND MISTRESS OF ALL CHURCHES; and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman bishop, the successor of St. Peter, THE PRINCE OF THE APOSTLES, AND VICAR OF JESUS CHRIST." The limited or Cisalpine interpretation of these claims was professed by the Irish titular Bishops in their examination upon oath before the legislature in 1825, and the Roman Catholic gentry are known to be generally still more moderate than their Bishops. See Phelan's and O'Sullivan's *Digest of the Evidence* in 1824—1825, vol. ii. chap. 1—5, especially pp. 47, 76, 104, 117,—(a work which ought at this time to be in every body's hands);—see also Butler's *Book of the Roman Catholic Church*, p. 8.

favourable answers from numbers of clergymen, and lay friends of the Church; and that Professor Burton, in his *Thoughts on the separation of Church and State*, inclines to Diocesan Synods with an admixture of lay members.

THE END.

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